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AMIGA FORMAT Arcade Issue 39
Caesar
Playable demo of Impressions' new Romanesque city management game.
Quicksilver Pinball
Playable licenseware demo from Amiganuts. Simple but highly addictive.
Plus
Dog Animbrush
Real Things animation brush for use in your own animations.
Mode_Switch
Resident program for switching between PAL and NTSC modes. The best.
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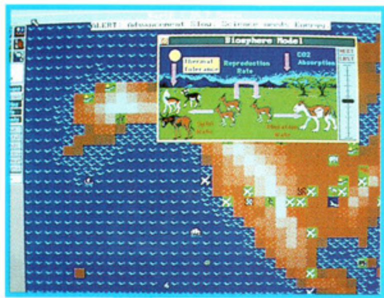
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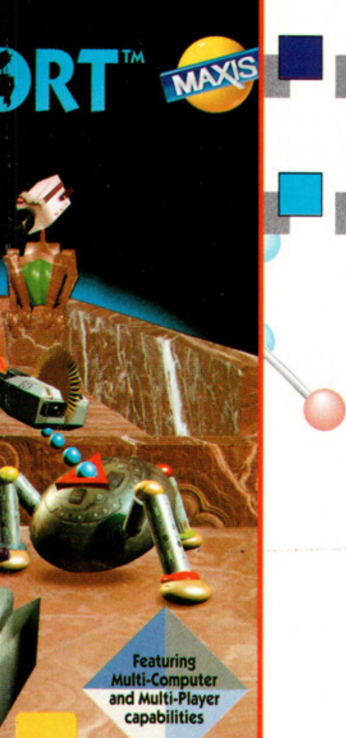
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ARTDINK

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OCTOBER 1992

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ADVERTISING PRODUCTION	Tracey O'Donnell
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CIRCULATION MANAGER	Sue Hartley
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PUBLISHER	Greg Ingham

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AMIGA FORMAT

30 Monmouth Street
Bath, AVON, BA1 2BW

Telephone 0225 442244
Facsimile 0225 446019

SUBSCRIPTIONS, BACK ISSUES and MAIL ORDER

Future Publishing, Somerton, SOMERSET, TA11 6TB

Telephone 0458 74011
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Best jokes of this ish: find 'em!

"Texas chainstore massacre"

"To the north is a text adventure creator..."

Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations.



Registered Circulation
160,256
Jan – July 1992

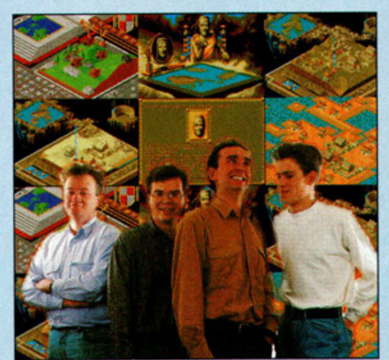
News



IN NEWS

As the A600 drops to £299, we ask why Commodore have decided on a price change now and what difference it will make to the Amiga's sales.

Screenplay



YES, IT'S YOUR TURN NOW!

In this amazing special issue, we begin the series in which the makers of *Populous* teach you how to create your own games in assembler!

Reviews



REVIEWED
Scala MM200

The top presentation program is back – and this time it can control all sorts of devices and gadgetry, plus some other amazing features...



REVIEWED
Video Studio 3

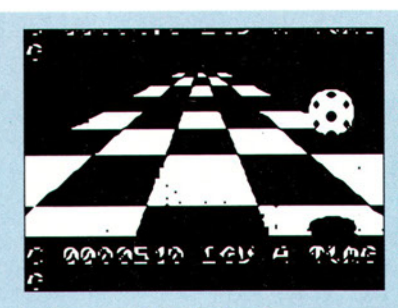
As seen in many of the video magazines, this is the ideal thing for the home-video enthusiast, with titling, test screens and lots more...




REVIEWED
Professional Draw 3

The top illustration package on the Amiga, best used for line art and full-colour illustrations. It's the business!

Regulars



IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

Pat McDonald finds a whole collection of games that are destined to keep him hooked for hours, yet cost only a quid or two...



IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

There's not too many music demos around this month, but there's some pretty high-quality animation, though!

Beat them at their own game!

Now it's your turn. You know what makes a good game, all you need is the know-how and the tools to produce your own classic. We've provided top Amiga programming language Devpac 2 and a tutorial series written by the Bullfrog team, creators of Populous. So get on with creating your own games... PAGE 63





Which printer?

If you're thinking of buying a printer, here's the information you need. Ten pages of tests, advice and explanations which will tell you everything you need to know about printers, and a bit more besides PAGE 138

A570 CD Amiga

The A570 CDTV interface is here, so read our complete in-depth hands-on review. But to know if you'll want to buy one, you'll also need reviews of every CD to date... PAGE 32

Good office

We pick the best word processor, spreadsheet, database program and disk utility that you could wish to buy... PAGE 184

Game reviews in ScreenPlay

Welcome to Amiga Format!

Good morning, good evening, good night... whatever time of day you pick up this magazine for the first time, I'd just like to say a cheery 'Hello!' and hope that you really enjoy the read ahead of you.

This is far and away the best-selling Amiga magazine in the world, but hopefully there's a good reason for that. We do our best to bring you the articles you want to read, and we try to maintain a carefully judged balance between all the disparate topics and activities that make Amiga owning such a popular and growing hobby.

For example, we've gone to great lengths to organise this month's Amiga Format Collection complete program – the assembler programming language, Devpac 2 – and the accompanying article on how to program games. The reason we've taken all this time and trouble is simply because there was an overwhelming demand for this feature. So we've gone right ahead and done it, and we only hope you enjoy it!



Damien Noonan, Editor

There's plenty of changes afoot in the Amiga market at the moment, which should bring more Amiga owners into the fold. A number of these interesting developments are discussed in News, which I don't believe has ever been so packed with major events.

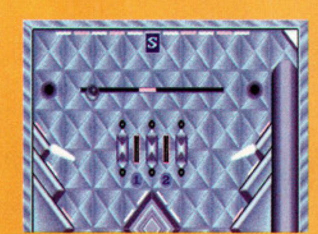
But perhaps the most important thing to happen this month is that the A570 CD drive has finally appeared. It has severe limits, because it needs 1Mb of chip RAM and a fat Agnus. But on the other hand, it has a serious part to play in the future of the Amiga.

If you read the interview with the MD of Commodore UK last month, you'll realise that the CD is the medium of the future. No argument. So what you need to know is, is this the right time to buy into the Amiga CD concept? Read on, and find out!

COVERDISK over the page...



Quicksilver Pinball



Demo of a fabulous new game all the way from the States with all the fun of those little pinging balls in one of the best pinball games you'll ever see!

Caesar



First Impressions of this amazing new god-like strategy game in a partly playable demo. It only works on Amigas with 1Mb of chip RAM, though!

Real Things Animals demo

A complete animbrush for you to test from the series that makes Deluxe Paint animation easy for even the most inexperienced novice!

Mode_Switch

The very best utility for switching between American NTSC and European PAL screen modes, which is useful for running programs you could otherwise not use!

and on p63... Devpac2!



The seventh in The *Amiga Format* Collection series of COMPLETE, FULL-PRICE PACKAGES: so you can learn to program your own games!





Coverdisk

OK, we don't give away sachets of shampoo or the latest diet plan on the cover of our magazine, but we do give you some invaluable utilities and some corking demos. Artists, megalomaniacs and pinball wizards will find this disk is a must. And here to guide you through is **Pat McDonald**...

Real Things Dogs

RGB STUDIOS **PAL/NTSC**

RGB have been producing their *Real Things* art packs for some years now. What they supply is a series of anim brushes and stills on a particular theme – for instance birds, humans, wildlife and now dogs. This is a little taster which might come in handy for artists and should give you a good idea of what you get in the full product.

I know what you're thinking – professionals don't use *Real Things*! Surely they hand draw everything? Wrong! You quite often see the works of RGB studios included in game intros, PD demos and other similar places. The professionals know how to save time, you see.

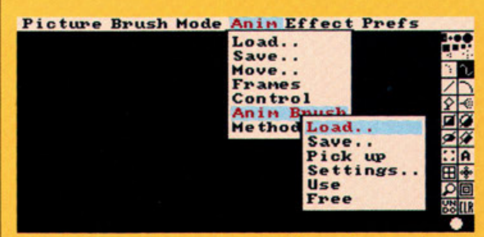
This is the way that RGB actually put *Real Things* packs together. They take a video sequence, and digitise it painstakingly. They then go over the resultant pictures, touching up any minute bits of video noise and bad dithering. They do however leave in realistic effects like motion blur, where movement happens faster than the camera.

To have a quick look at the sort of results you can get, double click on the Real Things anim icon on the Coverdisk. A very short (but pretty) looped animation will load and display. Click the left button to pause it, and the right button to quit. Not bad eh? *Real Things* packs contain lots of different styles for you to play with – the puppy at the bottom of the screen is a digitised image (with slight retouching), while the dog outline at the top is more basic, without any colouration.

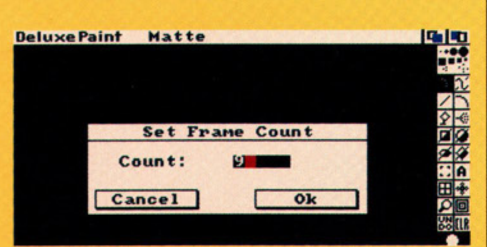
YOU CAN DO IT
TURN LIVE ACTION ANIMATION INTO LINE CARTOON
just one of the features of the new RealThings "DOGS"

The animation is really just an advert for the Real Things Dogs pack - but there is something more useful on the disk

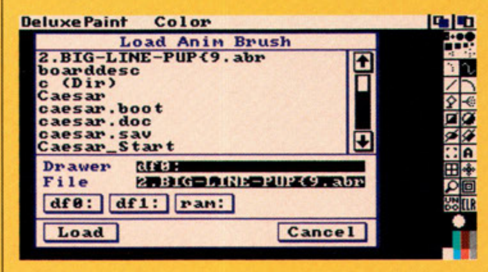
USING THE ANIMBRUSH



First, load Deluxe Paint III or IV. Then select 'Load Animbrush' from the Anim menu.



Go back to the Anim menu again, and set the number of frames to 9.



Put the Coverdisk into your disk drive, and click on the DF0 button on the file requester. The anim brush is called 2.BIG-LINEPUP{9.abr. Click on that name, then on the Load button.



Now click the brush down on the page – keep the mouse still. Press the 1 key to advance, click, press 1, click until you come back to the beginning. Press the 4 key to see the puppy running along.

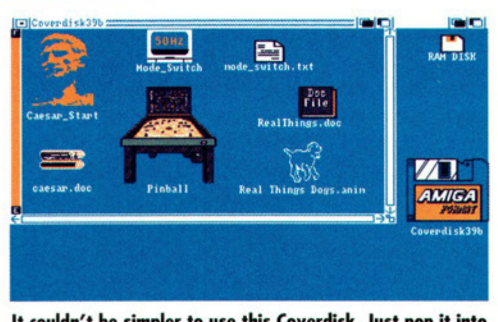
GETTING STARTED

It's very easy to get a Coverdisk going, if you follow these simple instructions. Just insert it into any Amiga computer, and either turn it on or (if it is on) reset it by pressing Ctrl and the two 'A' keys either side of the spacebar. A cut-down version of Workbench will load.

You should now see an icon called 'Coverdisk39b'. Move the mouse pointer to it and double click with the left mouse button. A window showing the contents of the disk will appear – again, move to and double click on the item you want to see. This applies to programs, documentation files and the *Real Things* anim.

You should find that, while examining a document, you can print it out by clicking on the Print file option. Obviously we can't test this on every different make of printer (by turning to Page 138 you will realise what a task that would be) – but it should work on the vast majority. This is not a standard feature of Coverdisks – some will print, some will not.

To quit out of a document, either press the Esc key or click in the box at the top left-hand side. There is no quit option out of either *Caesar* or *Pinball*; you will have to reset or turn off to get rid of them.



It couldn't be simpler to use this Coverdisk. Just pop it into any Amiga, and wait for Workbench to load. Then double click on whatever you want.

Caesar

IMPRESSIONS PAL/NTSC

Impressions in the past have tended to produce solid but not particularly inspired games. This, their next release, could be the best game they have done yet though. *Caesar* is about becoming a political figure in ancient Roman politics – you have to impress the emperor with your management skills, cunning and your war winning generalship.

Starting the game going is simply a matter of clicking on the icon. After displaying a simple title screen and generating the playing area, you will be left at the front end of the game. Caesar is played entirely with a mouse. The left mouse button is used to select icons, clear areas and erect buildings; the right mouse button aborts the current selection.

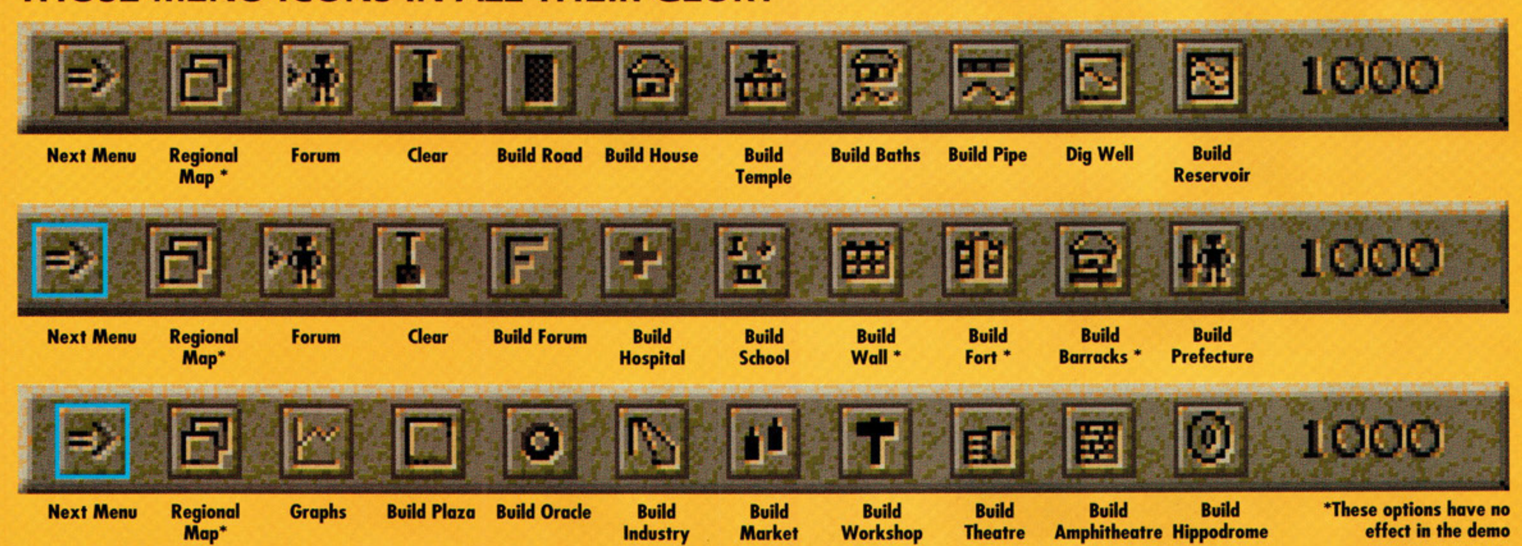
First, a quick word about what you won't find in the demo. One of the ideas behind *Caesar* is that, when war is threatened, you can take the pressure and pent up stress out of *Caesar* by playing with Impressions' war-game, *Cohort.* There is no war-game element on the demo though! I'm afraid you'll just have to go out and buy the game!

What you have got is a reasonable game in its own right, sort of like *Sim City* 13BC. You can't win in the demo. Eventually you're city will be destroyed – this is because what kept the old Roman Empire ticking over was a plentiful supply of slaves, and the slave allocation screens are not included. So there's no one around to look after your wonderful city.



The forum is where you talk to your advisors and see how well you are doing. Some of them aren't active in the demo – click the right mouse button to return to here.

THOSE MENU ICONS IN ALL THEIR GLORY



*These options have no effect in the demo

CAESAR CITY BUILDING

FIND A GOOD SPOT



When deciding where to build, choose somewhere near running water. Build a water pipe on top of the river – a cistern will appear. You can run pipes from the cistern through your city.

CLEAR THE AREA



You can use the spade icon to start clearing a wide area around the cistern. Run pipes from the water cistern around the scenery, this will give a backbone to the area.

PLAN SOME ROADS



You don't need lots of roads linking everything up. (OK they were dead famous for them but that doesn't mean you have to go mad).

Do try and decide where the residents are going to live, though, and where the governor (that's you!) will live in your forum, plus where your industry is going to go. Houses should have a temple nearby too. (They liked their gods did the Romans.)

BUILD SLOWLY



Important structures to start with are houses, baths, a forum and prefectures (police and tax collectors). Any houses you build will rapidly change from tents to villas if they are next to a water supply – if they don't, you may have to sink an emergency well.

WORKERS NEED JOBS



You will have to build an industrial zone in order to give your people some jobs. Start off with a couple of Workshops, then build up a heavy industrial zone and a market. Make sure there's a road link between the zone and the houses – otherwise people can't walk to work!

Quicksilver Pinball

AMIGANUTS PAL/NTSC



When you get a highscore, this tables appears. If your disk is write enabled, then it will be saved for posterity.

This is a one-level demo of a most excellent little licenseware game. Licenseware is a bit like budget software, in that it's very cheap as games go; the difference is that it is usually only available from one mail order source, in the case of *Quicksilver Pinball* it's Amiganuts United.

It's very easy to load – just double click on the icon after the Coverdisk has loaded. Press the Return key until you get to the main menu – this can be controlled either through the cursor keys or with a joystick. Most people find the game a lot easier when the keyboard is used to control the game.

If you've been holdidaying on Mars for the past 50 years, you might not have heard of pinball, so here's the rough idea. You have to keep the ball on the table – if it disappears off the bottom of the table, then you lose it. You only have so many balls per game, so don't waste any!

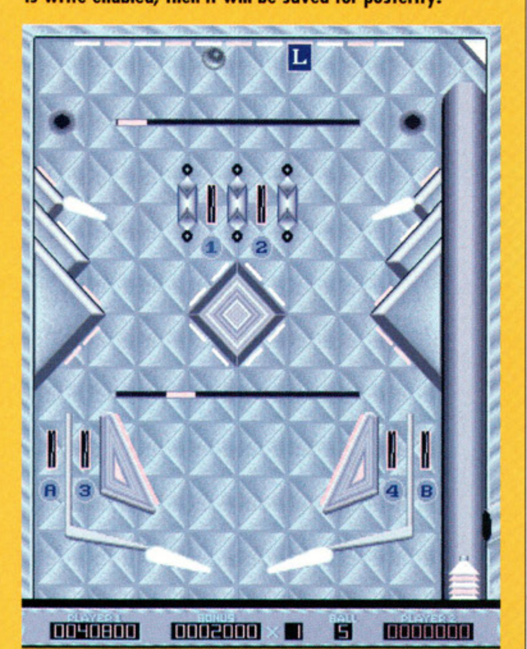
You get points for bouncing the ball off different parts of the table. For instance 5,000 points are awarded for landing the ball in one of the two holes at the top of the table. Points depend on where the ball hits. If you manage to light up all the 'Quicksilver' tokens at the top of the table, then the table will lock for a few seconds – you can't lose the ball during this time, so hit it for all it's worth.

Controlling the game with a joystick consists of pulling back and letting go to fire your ball, and waggling left and right to activate the flippers. The trouble with this is that you can't move both flippers at the same time (it's hard to move a joystick left and right at the same time).

When using the keyboard controls, press the relevant shift key to waggle each flipper. The cursor up and down keys are used to fire the ball into the game. The Esc key will abort the current game and take you back to the menu.

You may find the game a bit slow when played on PAL systems. This is because the game was written in the USA, where the screens are updated faster. To overcome this, you can use the *Mode_Switch* program described below. This is a common complaint of USA games (like *Wings of Fury*) they are not fast enough. To see them as they were meant to be seen, you need to use a display-switcher program.

The full version has four different tables in all, and is only available from Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX. Australian readers can get it from AU Australia, 199 Taylor St, Toowoomba, QLD, Australia 4350.



Although the table is fairly small in *Quicksilver Pinball*, it means that your reaction times have to be even better, as the ball hasn't so far to go!

WINNING WAYS

1) Learn how the ball moves. Every pinball table is different, and it takes a few games to see when the ball is safe, and when it's very likely to go down the hold. This one does have a Tilt feature – see if you can find it.

2) Keep your flippers up! Nine times out of ten, if a ball hits a down flipper it will disappear before your eyes. Most of the time your flippers should be raised – hammer away on the shift keys!

3) Don't go too fast or too slow. When the ball is leaping around at speed, it's very hard to predict just where it's going. When it's going slow, the ball has a nasty tendency to roll down to the bottom of the table.

4) Try for *Quicksilver*! By lighting up all the tokens at the top of the screen, bars will appear which prevent the ball falling. This means you can hammer the ball around at speed without worry.

5) Find the high scores. In general, you get more points while the ball is at the lower end of the table – but playing like this is dangerous, because you can lose the ball while blinking.

MODE SWITCH

P Sharpe PAL/NTSC

This is a handy little utility for switching your Amiga between PAL (the TV system used through most of Europe, Australia and New Zealand) and NTSC (which is used in the USA, Japan and Korea). Software written for NTSC looks slow and compressed on PAL systems. PAL software looks too fast and too big on NTSC systems.

So it's very useful to be able to switch to the other TV system, so that you see software as it was meant to be seen. In order to do this, the TV or monitor you use must have a vertical hold knob. It will almost certainly need a slight adjustment after you have run this program – but you usually only have to do this once, as screens will lock to either mode if vertical hold is set halfway between them.

First, the limitations. You can't switch TV systems on all Amigas. But most A500s and A2000s and later models can do this. It's all down to the Agnus chip fitted in your machine – 8372A or later is fine. Similarly, not all software likes being switched to different modes, although the majority won't kick up a fuss.

Now the good bits. *Mode_Switch* is a resident program. That means that, after you have run it once, it will stay inside your Amiga, ready to switch mode at the press of a few keys. When you reset the machine by pressing the two keys either side of the spacebar, the program will survive (you will see some on-screen corruption – don't worry about it). Of course, when you turn your machine off, the program is forgotten.

When you first run the program, it will switch to the different mode – so NTSC machines go to PAL, and PALs go to NTSC. Your screen will probably start rolling – don't worry, just twist the vertical hold control a little and it will stabilise. Notice how the screen is a different height.

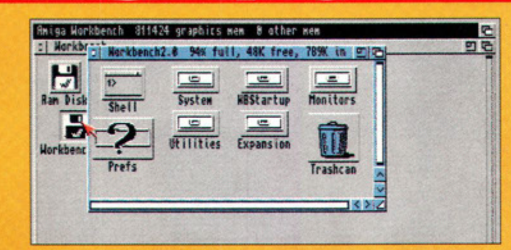
When you want to control *Mode_Switch*, press Left Alt, Ctrl and 1 simultaneously to select PAL mode, and Left Alt, Ctrl and 2 to select NTSC. Pressing Left Alt, Ctrl and 3 will turn off the program, although your machine will be left in the currently selected screen mode.

Using Your **Coverdisk**

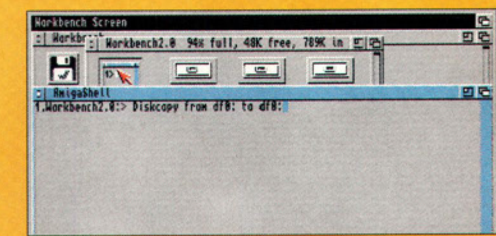
1. Always write-protect your disk. Move the tab so a hole is showing.
2. Copy the Coverdisk and use the copy, not the original. This may sound like a complicated task, suitable only for techno buffs, but it's surprisingly simple to do, just follow the simple instructions for copying the disk which are given below.
3. Read the instructions when using the programs.

Backing up your Disk

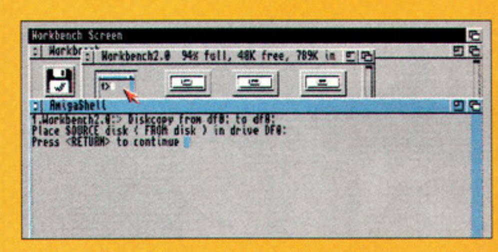
There are two ways of making a copy of your disk, and this is the easy one. Don't be daunted by the fact that you need to use the Shell or CLI: it's actually a lot easier than you might think. Just follow these simple steps...



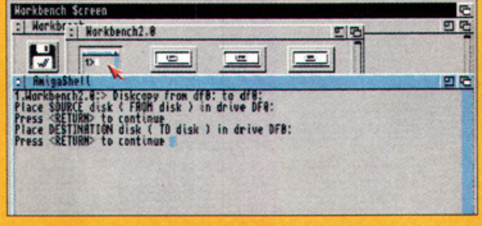
1 Load your Workbench disk. Open the disk, find the icon that says Shell or CLI and double-click on it.



2 When the Shell window appears and the drive light is out, type in:
`Diskcopy from DF0: to DF0:`
and press the Return key.



3. The Amiga will now ask you to insert the 'source' disk. It means the disk you want to copy, so put the Coverdisk in the drive and press the Return key.



4. Wait for a while and it will read all the information off the Coverdisk, telling you how far it has got. Then it will ask you to insert the "Destination" disk. Put the disk you want to copy your Coverdisk onto in the drive and press the Return key. Note that the disk does not need to be formatted already.



5. Put the source disk and destination disk in a couple more times when the Amiga asks for them. When it says "Diskcopy Finished" just type in:
`endcli`
to get out of the Shell or CLI. You may have to put the Workbench disk in again. Now your copy is ready!

DISK PROBLEMS?

If you have a problem with the disk – and you're sure the disk is in full working order – then you may need a little help. If you ring us on any Tuesday, and ask to speak to Pat McDonald, he will do his best to help you. Please understand, giving this sort of advice is time-consuming and we are very busy people, so only call if you really have to and do be considerate if we can't talk to you just then. If the problem is particularly complex it is better to send it to us in written detail. It will then be dealt with in the Workbench pages of the magazine.

BE CAREFUL!

We have done our best to check that all of the programs on the ***AMIGA FORMAT*** Coverdisk are simple to use and have no viruses. We cannot usually answer complex telephone queries on the software (see the Disk Problems? box) and we do not accept liability for any consequences of using the numerous programs that are on the disk.

COPYRIGHT

Unless it is specifically stated, the programs on the Coverdisks are not in the Public Domain and the copyright remains with the author of the program.

Because some of the programs on the Coverdisks are not PD, selling or distributing them without the author's specific permission is against the laws of copyright.

Disk not working?

We duplicate nearly 500,000 disks every month. Out of all those, obviously a few will be faulty. If the disk or any of the programs will not load or run properly, there may be a problem. Don't panic!

First try using the *DiskDoctor* utility on your Workbench disk to rescue it before sending it off for a replacement. In-full details of *DiskDoctor* can be found in the user's manual that came with your machine.

However, if your Coverdisk is in fact faulty, you should send it back INCLUDING A STAMPED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE for a free replacement within one month of the cover date to:

Amiga Format October Disk
Disk Copy Labs
Unit A, Westmarch
London Road
Daventry
Northants
NN11 4SA

Remember to include that stamped, addressed envelope!

First ever drop in price of an entry-level Amiga stuns the computer industry

A600 £299 price cut shocker

MONDAY AUGUST 10th saw the official retail price of the Amiga 600 slashed by £100 to £299. The Amiga 600HD, with its 20Mb internal hard drive, will, however, stay at £499, though Commodore intend to justify this price with a "bundle" of software that will mark it out as "more serious" than the plain A600.

This is the first time an entry-level Amiga model has seen a price cut in Great Britain. Commodore have suggested that the effects of the recession on UK high street sales have prompted the move. The lower cost of manufacture by comparison with the A500, and the increased reliability of the new machine are factors which have made the price cut feasible.

"We tried the price cut for a limited period in Ireland," explained Commodore UK's Marketing Manager Andrew Ball, "and it doubled sales of the machine". One dealer we spoke to, however, was skeptical of this claim, "How can you try a price cut for a limited period? If it doesn't work, are you going to put the price back up? And anyway, who would do a trial in a backwater like Ireland?"



Steve Franklin (right) the man who refused to cut the price of the A500, and Kelly Sumner (left) the new Commodore UK MD who has now cut the price of the A600.

Whether or not Commodore have backed the decision up with research, it will inevitably lead to an increase in sales over the crucial Christmas period.

Certainly it will be welcomed by potential Amiga owners and ***Amiga Format*** feels it is definitely the right move since it will encourage more people to join the Amiga community, but the dealers who sell the machines are not necessarily convinced, since their profit margins will be smaller.

DECISION MAKERS

The decision was taken by new Commodore UK MD Kelly Sumner, who took over in July. His predecessor, Steve Franklin, had for the last three years resisted a cut in the price of the A500. This was despite pressure from computer dealers who believed they could sell more machines if the list price was lower.

Indeed, Franklin's fixed-price policy has often been credited with the A500's success; the argument being that having the highest price of any product in the market sustained the Amiga's image as far and away the highest-quality home computer, distancing it from its 8-bit and 16-bit rivals. In many ways this argument is invalid now that competition from the Atari ST has faded, and 8-bit machines, including Commodore's own C64, have been killed off.

Although the A500 stayed at £399 for five years, the deal that you got for your money was enhanced considerably: first by the policy of 'bundling' three or four pieces of software, and later by the expansion to 1Mb of RAM, initially with the addition of a 512K RAM expansion and later, as with the 500 Plus, with the memory built in.

In recent months, the actual price at which it was possible to buy an Amiga 500 Cartoon Classics pack dropped considerably lower than the official list price, often as low as £329. Even large high street chains had begun to discount the packs. It seems likely that the list price will be closely adhered to, and it is possible that the new software-inclusive bundle for the A600 this Christmas cost more than the £299 RRP.

"There has been considerable pressure from many directions, including this magazine, for Commodore to make this price cut as soon as possible."

TIMING

Amiga Format knew that a price cut was under consideration, but the timing came as something of a surprise. Particularly since during the course of last month's interview with Kelly Sumner, ***Amiga Format*** had gained the impression that a cut would not happen until the beginning of October.

The evidence is that the decision was already made when we spoke to him. For example, Dixons actually had the A600 advertised at £299 on the Saturday before the new price-point was supposed to come into force.



The Amiga 600, now down to £299: the first ever price-cut for the entry-level Amiga. Is it a panic move, or a smart one?

Before the cut happened, Sumner also gave reasons why Commodore would make a price-cut, "If we altered the price we may gain more sales, knocking some out of the consoles, some out of the PC area." Clearly Commodore now believe that this is possible.

He also points out now that the new price has definite psychological advantages, "Rather than feeling like they're paying four hundred quid, people will feel as if they are paying two-hundred odd. It's a big difference."

There has been considerable pressure from many directions, including this magazine, for Commodore to make this price cut as soon as possible.

The surface-mounted chips in the A600 and the reduced size of the case make it a much cheaper machine to produce. On top of this, the machine is much more reliable, which cuts down the cost to Commodore of 'dead on arrival' machines – those that don't work when they come out of the box – as well as reducing burden of warranty repair costs.

We have to say that we are extremely pleased with the decision. It now makes the entry-level Amiga more affordable, which will bring more people into the Amiga community.

One factor remains to be seen: next month, the new A600 bundle for Christmas will be announced. The price could be higher than the plain A600 because of the extra games and Commodore are to break from tradition by including original Amiga software in preference to film or character licences.

The A600HD will also feature a bundle, described by Commodore as "More serious – but still games".

The correct choices here will be important, but even if Commodore get it horribly wrong and include some real turkeys, the price drop will still make the Amiga a real bargain buy for any one interested in some decent computing hardware this Christmas.

Reasons for the cut at a glance

1 The A600, with surface-mounted chips and a smaller case, is cheaper to make and leads to fewer returns.

2 The A600 is also more reliable, which cuts Commodore's costs from rejects and from after-sales care.

3 The recession is having an effect on all high-street sales but a 25 percent cut should help the Amiga fight this.

4 Commodore are hoping to gain sales at the expense of PC and games console rivals.

5 The new price is psychologically more acceptable to the customer because it seems close to £200 and remote from £400, and because the compact A600 looks less like a serious computer and more like a kind of computing console.

Future Entertainment Show, with *Amiga Format* backing, is set to be the biggest of its kind ever seen in the UK…

New show offers much for Amiga owners



LAST YEAR'S HIGHLY successful World of Commodore Show has been superceded by a new, bigger event.

The new show, called the Future Entertainment Show, shares much of the appeal of the WoC despite the fact that it is no longer Amiga-only. It is again being presented in association with ***Amiga Format*** and will feature just as many exhibitors and events for Amiga owners.

The FES starts at Earls Court in London on Thursday November 5th and carries on until Sunday November 8th. Admission is £7 for the whole day for adults and £5 for under-14s. But a £1.05 reduction to £5.95 and £3.95 is available if you book in advance on the FES Hotline, 051-356 5085.

Amiga hardware and software manufacturers so far confirmed to exhibit include GVP, Supra, Citizen Printers, and Progressive Peripherals and Software. Commodore will have one of the largest stands at the Show and may possibly unveil the new mid-range super Amiga.

Games publishers strutting their funky stuff at FES include Ocean, Electronic Arts, Psygnosis, Domark, MicroProse, Gremlin, and also Virgin Retail, the branch of the firm behind the famous Megastores.

The Show will also be televised as part of Yorkshire TV's new computer games show, *Bad Influence!*, which will air lots of live footage from the Show including all the action from the National Computer Games Championships.

The Finals of the Championships will take place at the FES, with qualifying heats on the Saturday and then the big shoot-out on the Sunday.

National Games Championships put up £10,000 prize for best player

The National Computer Games Championships is to offer a £10,000 first prize in a bid to find the best games-player in the country. Entry is unrestricted and contestants will need to master a number of different games on differemt computer formats.

The Championships are organised by Amiga Format and all the other magazines at Future Publishing, and will start in the two weeks commencing 19th October (during school half terms) when Amiga fans will gather at Virgin Gamestores in their lock areas to compete in the Regional Qualifiers, playing on Gremlin's *Zool*. Sega Megadrives and Nintendo Super NESs will also be available for competitors.

Those with the highest score will go through to a Regional Final held at Virgin Megastores in London, Cardiff, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle and Glasgow. Finalists will have to play on all three machines and only one player from each format will go through to the London finals, though the two highest-scoring runners-up in the country will join them. All eight will win an Amiga, a SNES and a Sega Megadrive as well as all the software to be used in the finals.

The finals will consist of quarters and semis on the Saturday of the Show, followed by the big two-way showdown on the Sunday, when we'll know who is the best player in the country!

Don't sit back and think 'I'm not good enough,' or some idiot who's half as good as you will win. Get down now to a Gamestore or check out any Future magazine to find your entry form!



A600 bundle – rumours suggest mixed ability pack

Rumours of the 'original games' that are to appear in the crucial A600 promotional pack this Christmas suggest that some of the titles could be rather weak ones, while one is likely to be outstanding.

Commodore have decided to concentrateon original Amiga games this year, rather than the big-name licences (such as *Batman* and *Bart Simpson*) which have given the packs identity in the past.

Suggestions are that the pack will include System 3's *Myth*, Ocean's *Epic* and Gremlin's *Zool*. An alternative rumour proposes that Epic was due to be in the pack, but has been withdrawn at the last moment because of the unfavourable reviews it has received in the computer games magazines.

Clearly the outstanding title is *Zool*, and this *Sonic the Hedgehog*-beater, reviewed this month (see page 74), is tailor-made to lead an Amiga push into new, console-dominated areas of the market. When we spoke to Gremlin's boss Ian Stewart he gave the impression that *Zool* would not be in the pack, seeming rather regretful at its non-inclusion. It might just be, however, that he was being cagey: the content of the annual Amiga pack is traditionally a closely-guarded secret until it is officially announced.

If the rumours of the line-up for the pack are to be believed, then two of the games are disappointing choices; but the inclusion of *Zool* would more than make up for that. What could be crucial is the price: though Commodore generally pay next to nothing for the software they include in a pack, the small margin on the A600 at its new £299 price-point could mean that the pack goes out at £329 or similar.

Notable absentee, if the rumours were correct, would be *Deluxe Paint*, which has been included with every Amiga for three years. This may well form part of the separate A600HD pack which will include more 'serious' games to justify the pricing of the 20Mb hard drive-equipped machine at a static £499.


THALION

New Amiga certain to be A2000 replacement



Speculation that the Amiga 2000 will be replaced by a new machine is turning to fact. Commodore has confirmed that details of the new Amiga are to be released in December.

SPECULATION IS RIFE about the specification for the Commodore's latest Amiga. It is set to be launched before Christmas, but its identity as an Amiga 2000 replacement has been given added weight by a rumour that the 2000 has already ceased production.

Commodore have officially stated that "details of availability" of a new machine will be released by December, that it will be based around a new custom chip set and that it will be followed by further developments next year.

They have also said that the first new machine will be called something along the lines of A2200 or 2400 and will cost, "somewhere between the price of an A1500 and a thousand pounds", which is right where you would expect the 2000 replacement to sit. This would seem to counter rumours of an A800 or A1000 Classic, which had been mooted as a possible mid-level machine.

Specifications for the new Amiga are expected to include a 68020 accelerated processor and possibly the new high-density floppy disk drive, with increased RAM expansion capacity and new, more colourful graphics modes also likely to be on offer.

The new machine has already been shown to developers in the UK and Commodore are known to be making efforts to ensure that software developers are aware of potential compatibility problems. They are offering to check software to see if it runs on the new machine and give advice on correcting it if it doesn't. Problems are likely to be caused by new Agnus and Denise graphics chips and screen modes, and new memory allocation.

A letter purporting to be from a developer in Holland who is in possession of two new models has recently stirred up debate, even though the letter has already been discredited. It refers to two machines, one of which is a 68040-equipped A3000-based machine referred to as the A4000, and the other is a new mid-range model in a smaller, three-inch high 'pizza box' case.

Rumours mill

Both machines are allegedly equipped with what has become known as the 'AA' chip set and Kickstart 2.1 ROMs. RAM expansion capacity is claimed to be massive, with a top end of 16Mb of chip and 64Mb of fast on the larger machine and 4Mb chip, 16Mb fast on the smaller one.

The chip set is said to include new, custom Denise, Agnus and Paula chips as well as two new chips, one named Lisa. Graphics capacity is supposed to have been enhanced to give more high-res modes, a VGA 256-colour emulation, a SuperHAM mode for pseudo-24-bit colour and a full 24-bit palette. Audio capacity is supposed to be four-channel 16-bit sound at sampling rates of up to 56KHz.

How large the pinch of salt you use to take all this rumour and counter-rumour with is entirely up to you.

One thing's for sure, though: much of what we have heard has the ring of truth to it. And if all the pieces of the jigsaw are not quite in palce, it will certainly not be too long in happening.

Developers warned to act now for compatibility

Commodore are working towards ensuring that all software will work on the new Amiga they have lined up for a pre-Christmas release. But some doubts have already been voiced as to whether sufficient numbers of software developers are taking any interest.

In August, Commodore UK held two developers' conferences at their Maidenhead headquarters at which they introduced their new machines to software developers and provided facilities for the developers to test their latest software for compatibility.

This excellent initiative is aimed at preventing a reoccurence of the problems that cropped up with the A500 Plus release. Many new releases did not work on the Plus even some months after the new machine went on sale.

Mev Dinc, of programming team Vivid Image, attended the first of the two developer conferences, "The thing that concerns me is that there wasn't a signle face there I recognised," he comments. "I'm just hoping that everyone else from the UK teams went on the second day."

Mr Dinc is hoping that all software developers will contact Commodore to make sure their software works. "They tested our latest game," he points out, " and it didn't work, but it was a very easy thing to fix it."

Commodore are encouraging any and all software developers to contact them as soon as possible about having releases checked for compatibility: if you want to get involved, get in touch with Sharon McGuffey at their Maidenhead HQ on 0628 770088.

Commodore reject fears on warranty repair firm

If you keep up with the financial news, you may have heard it reported that Wang, the company who were taken on by Commodore to repair Amigas under warranty are in financial trouble. Commodore have been swift to point out that this will not affect Amiga owners. Wang got the job after the National Repair Centre went bust.

Considerable concern was created several months ago when the company that ran the National Repair Centre, FMG, ran into trading difficulties and eventually closed down. Amiga owners whose machines were in for repair under warranty at FMG had to wait while Commodore attempted to extricate them from the tangled financial web that inevitably follows such a situation.

Commodore were able to handle the situation well, but if the same problem reoccured it would cause the company serious credibility problems, and news of Wang's US-based troubles has led to some fears.

Wang have 'filed for Chapter 11' in the US, which basically mean the US firm is in financial hot water. However, it seems that this is not going to affect the activities or financial health of the UK branch that handles on-site repairs for the A600.

"All the news and excitement about Wang relates solely to the American parent company," points out Commodore UK MD Kelly Sumner.

And, reasuringly, he asserts that, "Our position in the UK is totally unaffected. I'm completely comfortable with the situation, particularly the at-home support for the A600 - which has exceeded all my expectations in terms of reliability."

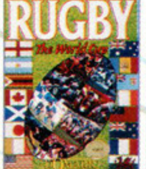
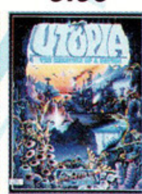

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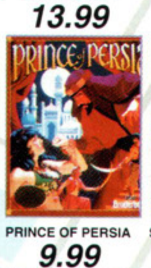
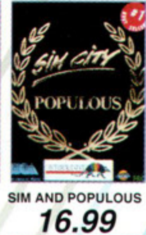
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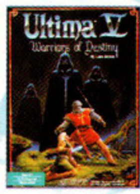
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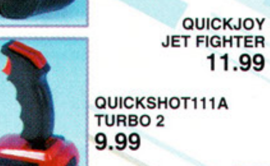
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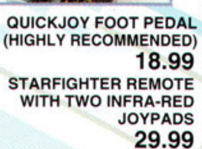
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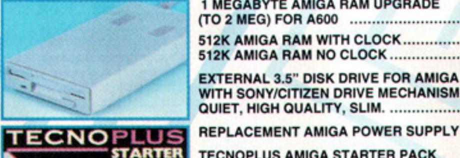


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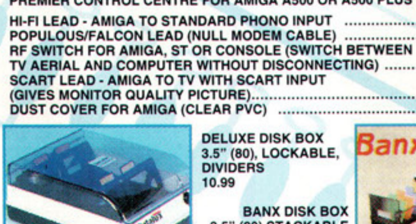
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Games News

Amiga Format's games correspondent, Neil Jackson, writes from the leisure front line on all the the lastest releases. Games that are so new that most haven't even thought about being released yet, and some on the second time around.

ICE PICK THEIR MOMENT

A new publishing company, International Computer Entertainment, led by ex-Electronic Zoo boss, Stewart Bell, is about to release its first crop of games for the Amiga. The firm, which is now handling a range of products from many ex-Electronic Zoo developers and programmers, hopes to have six games ready in time for Christmas.



The most interesting of the six is *Abandoned Places Two*, sequel to the role-playing adventure which appeared last Christmas, just before Electronic Zoo's demise. ICE seem pretty confident that *Abandoned Places Two* is something special - they're touting it as the biggest advancement in role-playing games in the past few years. The game will feature colourful half-bright mode graphics, a larger play-window than any other role-player and an impressive new control system. ICE expect that *Abandoned Places Two* should be ready for early 1993. The remainder of ICE's stash of games consists of:



Fireforce – a horizontally-scrolling, army-style shoot-em-up, reminiscent of the classic *Green Beret.*



Piracy – a role-playing adventure set on the seven seas. ICE promise to bring the words 'scurvy, grog, plunder and pillage' back into common useage (hold on, hasn't *Monkey Island* already done this?).

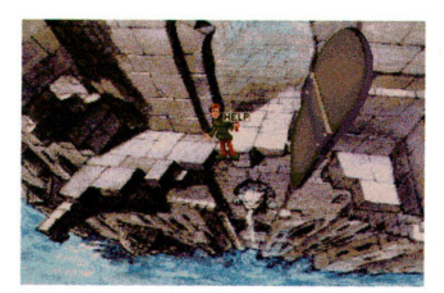


Gnome Alone – A cutesy-arcade game centred on a heroic garden gnome called Grobble, who's imprisoned in a garden where he's responsible for lawn-order. Your job is to help him escape using your arcade skills.



Fatal Strokes – a bizarre arcade game featuring the work of Heironymus Bosch, Georges Seurat and Nicolas Poussin. Some of their most famous paintings act as backgrounds for a collection of games.

Access Denied – a virtual reality environment where you are able to fly around the entire Earth. Two warring computers control the data-space you're flying in; one is evil and one (you'll never guess) is good. The computers can help you hack your way into corporations and steal money from databases, but you have to decide which computer is the right one to trust. Your life could depend on making the right decision.



***Curse of Enchantia*: kidnapping capers from Core.**

Core Design

Core Design announced recently that they're working on their first animated role-playing adventure: *Curse of Enchantia*, an icon-controlled interactive story with a fantasy element.

A coven of evil witches opened a portal Earth which gave them power to steal a child. You play the nipper, Brad, who's been transported to Enchantia to form part of a recipe for eternal life. Needless to say, your escape is not an easy affair, but, hell! the world's at stake.



***Ween*: French frolics and medieval mayhem.**

Digital Integration

Digital Integration are soon to release two new games by French software house Coktel Vision. The first is *Ween*, a medieval fantasy which features plenty of digitised video animations. *Ween* is a film-like quest to rescue a doomed kingdom from an evil power. DI's other title is *Gobliiins 2: The Prince Buffoon.* It's the sequel to the recent *Gobliiins.* It features two more goblins on a mission to free an imprisoned prince.



***HeroQuest 2*: better than No.1 we trust.**

Gremlin

Gremlin announce the imminent release of two games they've been quietly putting together: *HeroQuest 2 – The Legend of Sorasil* (the follow-up to the paper-to-Amiga RPG) and *Pandemonium* (a frantic cutesy-beat-em-up with Lemmings-style strategy). Expect to see *HeroQuest 2* in the shops in November, while *Pandemonium* is due for an early 1993 release.



Caesar*: mixed up *Sim City* and *Civilization.

Impressions

Recently the company, led by David Lester, have been re-evaluating their games. The result is *Caesar*, (which you can partially examine on this month's Coverdisk), a strategy game that combines *Sim City* and *Civilization* in one package. They are also about to release another strategy game, *Paladin 2*. It comes with its own construction kit.



Budget News

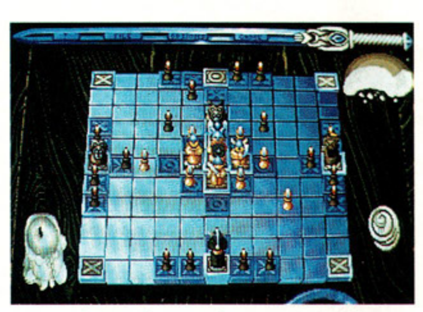
As the recession bites even more deeply, budget games look more and more appealing. Historically, budget games have been regarded as being either naff or old (and sometimes both), but it's not always the way. Here's a few newcomers that might satiate your desire to play more than you pay:

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Double Dare £7.99
Dalek Attack £14.99
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Codemasters – 0926 814132
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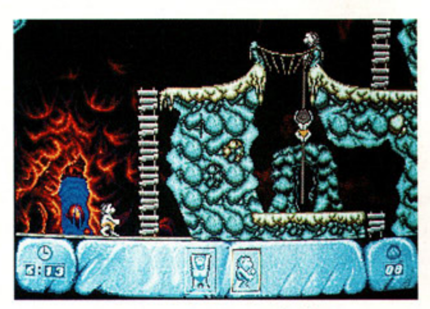
Hi Tec – 0742 587555
Stop Press! As we go to press news reaches us that Hi Tec have gone into in adminstrative recievership, and the whole business is up for sale. They're still selling The *Jetsons, Scooby Doo,* and



Ragnarok: your chance to be an ancient viking.

Mirage

Ragnarok is nearly finished, and the first demos are reaching us now. This computer adaptation of an ancient viking game is undergoing it's final tweaking and testing and should be with us for the November issue.



Humans: no, it's not *Lemmings*, cheeky!

Humans, Mirage's long awaited contender for the *Lemmings*-lookalike of 1992, just missed its review in this issue of ***Amiga Format***. Of the 80 levels which are to be included, nearly 50 have already been completed. Only a few minor adjustments to control systems need doing before its release.



Streetfighter 2: arcade conversion-time from US Gold as this smasher begins its journey to a date with the Amiga this Crimble.

US Gold

Capcom's arcade hit, *Streetfighter 2*, gets the US Gold conversion-treatment. This all-action beat-em-up featured a combination of complex fighting moves and spectacular graphics in the arcades, and US Gold hope to bring the full flavour across to the Amiga by Christmas.



Stuart 'Psycho' Pearce: there's only one of him.

UBI-Soft

The French publishers prove that they've got more front than Margate (or more balls than Wembley depending on how you look at it), by asking ace England and Nottingham Forest captain and full-back Stuart Pearce to endorse their forthcoming football compilation.

It was 'Psycho' Stuart Pearce who was mercilessly head-butted in the face by French (so-called) player Basile Boli during the European Championships. Pearce's compilation (which is to be launched this month under the title *Psycho's Soccer Selection*) features *Kick Off 2*, *World Championship Soccer*, *International Soccer Challenge* and *Manchester United* for £30.99.



Arsenal FC: more fun than the North Bank?

Thalamus

Thalamus are working on three games for release in the next month or so. *Arsenal FC* is a full-screen football sim that offers arcade action and team management for £25.99. *Nobby the Aardvark* is a platform game with a cuddly ant-eater who's searching for paradise (Antopia). Finally, *Beastmaster* is a new 300-screen arcade adventure which features a host of creatures to interact and fight with. Priced at £25.99 we hope to bring you a full review in next month's ***Amiga Format***.

Cartoon Collection. However, they did have a load of new titles ready to hit the streets, inlcuding a Daffy Duck game. Sadly, we may not see these unless someone takes over the company soon. So if you suddenly feel the desire to buy a budget label, you should contact David Palmer on the number above.

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Test Drive 2 £7.99
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Touchdown – 0268 541126
Seven titles currently undecided – waiting for contractual things to be sorted out. It's possible we may see *Volfied*, *Pipemania*, *Paradroid*, *Gazza 1*, *Gazza 2*, *Better Dead Than Alien* and *Stormtrooper* soon.

TRONIX – 081-960 2255
At long, long last (and for the Nth time of announcing) we might finally get to see *Motorhead* (featuring that loveable cutie, Lemmy) £TBA

Zeppelin – 091-385 7755
They haven't confirmed all these, but they're hoping to release:
International 5-A-Side, *Tag team Wrestling* and *Arcade Fruit Machine*, for £7.99 each.

Top 30 Amiga Full Price Games Chart

ELSPA PENGUIN CHARTS, COMPILED BY GALLUP, SPONSORED BY PENGUIN BISCUITS

1(1)	■	**Sensible Soccer** Renegade/Mindscape/Sensible Software	**FG91%**
2(-)	New	**Espana The Games** Ocean	**43%**
3(14)	▲	**Civilization** MicroProse	**FG94%**
4(2)	▼	**Monkey Island 2** US Gold/Lucasfilm	**FG95%**
5(5)	■	**Fire and Ice** Renegade/Mindscape	**89%**
6(6)	■	**Formula One Grand Prix** MicroProse	**FG92%**
7(4)	▼	**Lure of the Temptress** Virgin/Revolution	**FG92%**
8(7)	▼	**Epic** Ocean	**34%**
9(9)	■	**Graham Taylor's Soccer Challenge** Krisalis	**82%**
10(21)	▲	**Project X** Team 17	**75%**
11(3)	▼	**Striker** Rage Software	**FG93%**
12(11)	▼	**Jaguar XJ220** Core Design	**79%**
13(-)	New	**Crazy Cars 3** Titus	**FG93%**
14(20)	▲	**Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker** Virgin	**FG91%**
15(12)	▼	**Dune** Virgin	**79%**
16(19)	▲	**PGA Tour+** Electronic Arts	**Compilation**
17(8)	▼	**Championship Manager** Domark	**41%**
18(15)	▼	**The Manager** US Gold/Software 2000	**79%**
19(16)	▼	**John Madden American Football** Electronic Arts	**FG94%**
20(25)	▲	**Hook** Ocean	**58%**
21(-)	Re-entry	**F15 Strike Eagle 2** MicroProse	**FG90%**
22(17)	▼	**Eye of the Beholder 2** US Gold/SSI	**FG91%**
23(23)	■	**Alien Breed** Team 17	**74%**
24(24)	■	**World Series Cricket** Soundware International	**61%**
25(10)	▼	**The Addams Family** Ocean	**78%**
26(-)	Re-entry	**Easy AMOS** Europress Software	**92**
27(29)	▲	**Dizzy's Excellent Adventures** Code Masters	**Compilation**
28(-)	Re-entry	**DynaBlaster** UBISoft	**87%**
29(-)	New	**Carl Lewis Challenge** Psygnosis	**Review next issue**
30(30)	■	**Space Crusade** Gremlin Graphics	**82%**

A3000 sees massive price slash


The Amiga 300: 25MHz, 50Mb hard disk, 2Mb of RAM, and all this in the shops for £1,000? Can it be true?

The price of the A3000 has been cut substantially, so much that Commodore are able to claim that a typical set-up is now "nearly two thirds less than its original price".

The cuts, effective simultaneously with the price-drop of 25% on the A600, see an Amiga 3000 25/50, a 25MHz machine with a 50Mb hard drive and 2Mb of RAM, down to only £1,299 list price from £2,999. This could bring the on-sale price down to little over £1,000.

This compares favourably with prices of 386-based PCs running at a similar clock speed. A similar specification of PC could weigh in at anything from £899 for a 'non-name' machine, to around £1,600 for a well-known brand, with the Amiga generally coming out on top when expandability is taken into account.

Commodore suggest that the cuts are, "To make this powerful machine even more attractive in the corporate sector", which it undoubtedly will be. The area of business on which it is likely to have most impact, however, is with complementary software that enables it to be seen as an all-in-one multimedia 'solution'. Multimedia presentations are now beginning to take off in the business world, and the A3000 could be well placed to take advantage.

Inevitably, though, there's some reading between the lines to be done, too. The price of the faster chips, the hard drives and RAM that make the A3000 such an attractive proposition are falling, so prices have to come down. And Commodore will soon be releasing an Amiga 4000 with an even higher specification, so a repositioning of the A3000 to make room for it was bound to happen.

All the same, for home and hobbyist users, particularly graphics and video fiends, the 3000 now represents an affordable step up to a genuinely powerful system.

Big bonus for music fans

FUTURE MUSIC

Future Music is a new magazine for anyone who's ineterested in how technology and music combine. It comes from Future Publishing, the makers of ***Amiga Format***, and in actual fact it's even edited by ex-***Amiga Format*** and *Amiga Shopper* editor Bob Wade.

The first issue comes complete with a compendious reference work, the *Future Music Black Book*, entirely free. This unique book has been created by the *Future Music* team to help you in almost evey area of music-making, from choosing studio to playing live, from sussing out MIDI codes to choosing the right music software.

Future Music will cover all aspects of music technology, from electronic instruments to Amiga music software, with a familiar mix of news, reviews and tips. The first issue will be in the shops, all warm and ready to buy, on October 15th, and will cost £1.95.

Dealers' mixed reaction to A600 price cut

Reaction to the £100 reduction in RRP of the A600 has been mixed among Amiga dealers.

While most welcome it as a way of selling more machines, many also feel that reduced margins for profit will have a negative effect on both dealers and customers. There is also evidence that sales of the new A600 are still very sluggish.

"It's great news. At this new price the Amiga market will grow considerably," comments Andy Leaning, spokesperson Silica. "It'll be interesting to see what other manufacturers, particularly those producing high-specification games consoles like the NEC and NeoGeo, do. I'd expect a lot of the more serious console buyers will look at the Amiga 600, given its better specification."

Giles Harwood of Harwoods agrees, "We view it positively, because anything that helps the Amiga to sell in volume against lower-priced machines such as the consoles has to be good news."

But will the much-reduced margins cause problems? "I think it causes everybody problems," says Giles, "When we first started selling Amigas, we used to get around 35 percent. Now it's under half of that. This makes it more difficult for us to add value; we prefer to give a little extra in the way of software and so on. As long as the customer understands that we won't be able to do that to quite the same extent."

Graham Kelly of Trilogic is also positive, but raises another concern. "We're all pleased there's a price cut on the A600, but people still don't want to buy it. We're getting about ten calls wanting 500 Pluses to one wanting the 600. We've still got the 1.3s in stock and they're outselling the 600s."

And profit margins? "The margins are atrocious", says Graham. Trilogic are selling the A600 at £289 and it seems very unlikely that anyone will be able to do it cheaper without cutting suffering financially.

There are other teething problems for the A600. Currently, third-party peripherals for the new machine are extremely rare, so customers are deterred by the lack of RAM expansion beyond 2Mb and the scarcity of hard drives. Developers, even registered ones, are finding that no information has been made available to get them started on expansions for the PCMCIA slot or the internal IDE hard drive adaptor.

Another minor irritation for dealers is the policy on 'dead on arrival' (DOA) A600s – machines that don't work when they arrive. Rather than being able to send them back for a replacement, dealers have to get them fixed on-site by Commodore's warranty repair firm Wang. Being visiyed on-site may seem like common sense to most home users, but it's an unusual system for a retail organisation to handle.

Editor's opinion



All modesty aside...

We're pleased to be able to announce that the official monthly circulation of ***Amiga Format*** for the first six months of this year has reached the new record figure of 160,256. This figure, approved by the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC), confirms ***Amiga Format*** as the best-selling computer magazine in Britain, the best-selling Amiga magazine in the world and probably also the best-selling magazine for computer games in the whole of Europe.

Bizarre fact follows: furthermore, the circulation of this magazine is fractionally higher than that of music magazine *Q*, which makes ***Amiga Format*** the best-selling 'male interest' magazine in Britain, with the exception of the rude, naked women-type titles.

We're not indulging in this fine piece of own-trumpet blowing for the sake of our healt, though. It makes a serious point too. Amiga owning as a hobby is now something to be taken very seriously. By Christmas, there should be over one and a half million Amiga owners in the UK.

If you think that magazines catering for fishing, cars, popular music and the cinema are all less popular than this particular Amiga magazine, you realise just what an active and involved bunch of people all you Amiga fans are.

Incidentally, ***Amiga Format*** was once again voted as number one 'magazine which most aids stocking decisions' by retailers in the survey conducted by computer trade magazine *CTW*. This is the third year running that the dealers and shops have stated that they trust ***Amiga Format***'s reviews more than anyone else's.

As ever, the point of the whole story is this – if ***Amiga Format*** is a success, it's because we consistently try to bring you the things you want to read about. Don't let us rest on our laurels: tell us what else you think we could and should be doing. Make this magazine into the magazine you want to read – after all, it costs enough!

NEWS ROUND

Laying in ambush for all the latest hardware and software releases…

DPAINT BEATER?

Exciting news for all you Amiga graphics freaks; Digitial Creations, the people who make the DCTV pseudo-true-colour graphics adaptor, are working on a potentially groundbreaking, stand-alone paint package by the name of *Brilliance.*

If, as we believe is more than likely, this is a version of the paint program that comes with the DCTV, this could be a remarkable prospect. Described by *Amiga Format* Art Editor, Marcus, as "truly superb," for its extensive features, including excellent rub-throughs (a facility by which pictures can be merged and blended).

This news comes at a quiet time for new graphics releases. There's very little in the way of new graphics software around at the moment. The previously hyperactive 24-bit colour card market has gone pretty quiet, waiting to see how the specifications of the new Amigas compare to the real thing, true colour. So the release of *Brilliance* is good news for the Amiga market.

SHARPEN YOUR IMAGE

The other interesting snippet that is doing the rounds is that GVP (Great Valley Products) are working on an image-processing program to accompany their IV24 true colour system. This program has already been known by several different names during its short life, so we won't even attempt to predict what it will be called. It's expected to be finished by late Autumn.

The IV24 system includes a true-colour framebuffer card with a digitiser and a picture-in-picture mode built in and comes with a selection of software including a version of titling/presentation program *SCALA* and 3D modelling system *Caligari.* The drawback is that the system has never overcome teething troubles, to the extent that *Amiga Format* has never felt that it is ready for review.

The image processing program could give the system a new lease of life. Image processing, particularly when used for combining and mixing scanned images, is probably the main tool of high-end graphics applications. Clever-clever 3D modelling is dying out by comparison.

One important aspect that will determine the future of the 24-bit market is that NewTek are working on a brand-new version of their Video Toaster system that will work in European PAL format. This graphics-generation and editing system has caused a storm in the States, but has previously only been available in NTSC format.

GVP PRICE CUTS

Real Stop Press stuff, this. We've just heard that GVP are about to make substantial price cuts across their entire range of hardware.

American firm GVP (Great Valley Products), for anyone who has spent the last three years in the Sahara desert, are the world's leading third party manufacturer of Amiga hardware and make what we consider to be the finest range of hard disk drives for the A500, including the fabulous A530 drive equipped with a 68030 accelerator, reviewed last month.

Both GVP's UK distributor Silica and GVP

Continued overleaf

Printer makers continue drive for Amiga owners

Star are the latest printer manufacturers to announce that they are creating printer drivers especially for Amiga owners. This follows initiatives from Citizen, whose *Amiga Print Manager* is a driver and more besides, and Canon, who have drivers for their bubblejet range.

One of the major hassles for Amiga owners has always been finding a driver that gets quality results out of their printer. Most printers are designed for the PC market and the specific needs of Amiga owners have tended to be ignored. This means most Amiga owners use the Epson printer driver and have to run their printers under Epson emulation.

Fortunately, many printer manufacturers are now realising how important the Amiga is and are making sure to supply Amiga drivers with their printers. Citizen showed the way, Canon also cater well for Amiga owners, and now Star, whose LC-10 dot matrix was for several years the most popular printer with Amiga owners, have joined in.

Even better news is that the disk with the drivers is available free of charge. Malcolm Brown, technical Director for Star, told *Amiga Format*, "All Star-registered dealers have been supplied with masters of the drivers, but if you have a problem getting hold of them they can always contact our free technical hotline for assistance." Star's hotline number is 0494 471111 and operates Mon-Fri 9.30-5.



A real Star: yet another company gives up to the undeniable attraction of the Amiga. Good news for everyone.

Comrades in arms



Bringing back the KGB – Experience the thrills and spills of state-inspired, authoritatrian violence in your own home.

Soon to be released by Virgin Games is *KGB*, a graphical adventure from French software house Cryo. The production team, previously responsible for titles such as *Captain Blood* and *Dune*, have spent 17 months developing the game which takes an inside look at the operations of the *KGB*, around the time of the attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev a couple of years ago.

Designers Philippe Ulrich and programmer Yves Lamoureux, commissioned a 300-page novel by Irish author Johan Robson on which they based the game. *KGB* contains over 100 characters with a huge number of locations. Previews also suggest that it employs an interesting method of control which is slightly different from that used by other adventures of this sort.

As well as *KGB* the firm have their fingers in a number of other pies: *Eden*, a 3D adventure on CD-only that continues the dinosaur race until mankind arrives on the scene; *Star Watcher*, a game based on the upcoming film from Ridley Scott which is the first to be created solely using computer graphics; and several French film companies are interested in producing a film from a short story which Philippe penned himself! Phew! Quelle qualifications…

MANSELL MAKES A NEW NAME

Gremlin's forthcoming race-driving game, *Nigel Mansell's World Championship Challenge*, is to get a name change as a direct result of Our Nige claiming the World Championship. The high-speed, arcade-style racer

is now going to be known simply as *Nigel Mansell's World Championship*, reflecting that it's now no longer such a challenge for the 1993 Formula One World Champion.

Gremlin are understandably very happy at the news of Mansell's effective victory, following his second place at the Hungarian Grand Prix (there are still several races left in the championship, but Mansell is far enough ahead of the rest to be unbeatable).

The Sheffield-based software house are even happier that they had the foresight to buy the exclusive world rights to carry the Mansell endorsement – in the same year as his victory.

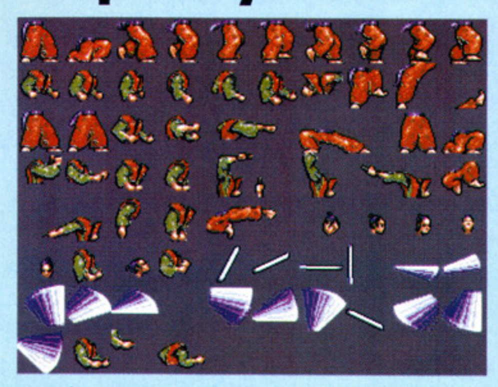
Although Nigel can't expect to relax and play the game for a few weeks yet, you can buy the game of his fame later this month, price is stil to be announced.



Gremlin strike it lucky (or astutely depending on how you look at it) with the Nigel – Out Nige – Mansell racing licence.



Chop-socky cheers!



Second Samurai in progress. He's got legs, arms, heads and torsoes and we hope he knows how to use them.

As we reported last month, Vivid Image (of First Samurai fame) are busy working on their new game, Second Samurai, even though they have yet to secure a publishing deal. However, the lack of a publisher seems not to worry Vivid Image - after all, they managed to survive when their previous publisher, Mirrorsoft, folded and almost took *First Samurai* with it. "When you've been through that, you want to take your time to pick the right publisher and the right deal," explains Mev Dinc, *Second Samurai*'s older and wiser chief designer.

Unlike its predecessor, *Second Samurai* comes with a two-player mode.The new system is expected to be an ideal way of helping newcomers to play. An experienced player can guide a beginner through the game, and if the beginner lags too far behind he's simply re-positioned at the leader's spot instead of scrolling off screen.

Programmer Raf Cecco believes *Second Samurai* is a vast improvement on the widely-acclaimed *First Samurai.* "We're starting again right from scratch," he said. "We're all working on the design, and we're not using anything from *First Samurai*, other than for inspiration. The code is all new." With a redesigned main character, better parallaxing and sprite-movement, and a wealth of hidden humour, *Second Samurai* looks likely to be even better than its predecessor. Vivid Image are certain they'll have the game completed in time for Christmas, and Mev is confident that they'll be approached by a respectable publisher before then. It's a case of "no more fat Czechs, but we'd like some money".

Amiga alien attack line

Based in Hackney, East London, a creative force that goes by the name of Alien Heart create art and music using their humble Amiga 500, a 20Mb disk drive and 3Mb of memory. Thom, one half of the two-person team, loves it, but, "it would be nice to have the luxury of having an accelerator, but even without anything too elaborate I can still create art work and music that's commercially viable."

There are literally hundreds of disks cluttering his studio, cum living room, cum bedroom, cum kitchen. The disks contain thousands of images that he and partner Jane have created on screen. Many of the images have also been printed out in one form or another, the most striking of which is the record cover for Eon's *Basket Case*, first mentioned in Issue 37 in the discography of Urban Shakedown who remixed of the track.

"The cover is actually Ian B from Eon. We scanned his image into the Amiga and then manipulated it. His hand eventually looked quite menacing as it resmebled a hand gun. Some of the manipulations, though, just ended up looking quite ridiculous, but the final artwork we were very pleased with."

Alien Heart are very much aware that computers are an inseparable part of our lives, but they want to take advantage of them and use them for their own creative means. Thom first bought his Amiga in 1987 and chose it because it was "...far more capable than everything else that was on the market. I was looking to use the Amiga for both graphics and music so it was the most viable option." Alien heart have produced there own music on the Amiga, then created the record cover artwork with the Amiga and even used the Amiga to produce their animation to promote their distinctive industrial-techno sound in New Zealand and Japan. So if you've a wealth of talent and the desire to express yourself then, according to the experts, the Amiga is the machine to use.



The Amiga as artist's mate. Art may be a subjective choice but an A500 is not.



Religious symbolism? Masonic imagery? Or just a good old Amiga having fun?



What do you need a huge studio space for when your palette and brushes are all stored inside an A500? Alien Heart create computer art in this room.

retailer Power Computing have contacted us to tell us of the impending cuts, though no exact pricing details are yet available. GVP hardware is generally acknowledged to be of the highest quality, but has also always been the most expensive. If it offers value as well as quality, that can only be welcome.
Silica 081-309 1111
Power Computing 0234 843388

GOING TO PRESS

The Disc Company, whose *KindWords 3* word processor has just gone on sale, have branched out with two heavyweight DTP-related packages. The first is *The Publisher*, a high-resolution mono-only DTP package that will retail for £49.99. The second is *The Publisher Colorpro*, a professional-standard version of the software that includes full separated 24-bit colour support and will sell for £149.99.

It's a good time for a new low-end DTP package, with the area of Amiga use that lets you create your own newsletters, fanzines and posters seeing a burst of popularity at the moment. But the professional version will face strong competition, with the recent release of *PageStream 3* and *Professional Page 3* proving that the two old heavyweights of this market are still reigning champions.

A wide-ranging upgrade system means that owners of *Home Office Kit, KindWords, MaxiPlan, Publisher's Choice* and other The Disc Company products will be able to upgrade for £19.99 to *The Publisher* and owners of *The Publisher* can then take a £100 upgrade to the *Colorpro* version.

Will anyone want to? One feature of *The Publisher* could make it a hit: it has PostScript support and can use Type 1 fonts. It can also rotate and mirror text and graphics, which is extraordinary power for a program at this price.

FONT-TASTIC!

Another firm has joined the list of companies providing libraries of fonts for DTP and video. Fontshop of Lincoln have just released 350 Adobe Type 1 fonts for *Page Stream* and *Professional Page*, available in seven volumes packed with 50 fonts per volume. They have also released 3 volumes of Compugraphics fonts, as used by Workbench 2. Contact Fontshop on 0526 398403, or send an SAE to Fontshop, 22 Sincil Street, Lincoln LN5 7ET if you would like a free typeface sample sheet.

PUBLISHING WISDOM

A new book on DTP claims to be the first that will teach you the principles in detail while assuming no prior knowledge, and is targeted at the normal home user, not the professional.

The Complete Desktop Publisher is a 200-page guide to DTP the practical way, showing techniques for good design and aimed at the sort of applications most of us might have a use for: leaflets, posters, club newsletters and so on.

The book might seem expensive at £21.99, but this does tend to be the going rate in this sort of field. From what we've seen it looks good, but we will bring you a full review.
Purdie Publishing 0784 465428

ZEN AND THE ART OF VIDEO

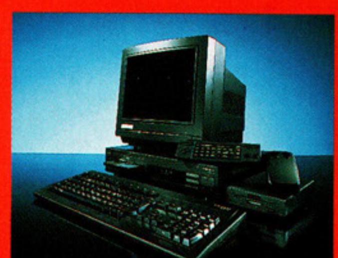
Manchester-based ZEN have a couple of handy bits of software up their sleeves for anyone involved in Amiga video. *The AntiA Superpack* combines a font enhancement program that smooths out fonts with the Agfa Video Unlimited collection of 25 scaleable fonts, supplied in the Workbench 2 Bullet format. The whole kit and

Continued on page 28

AMIGA CDTV. £200 OFF IF YOU PAY WITH PLASTIC.



The plastic in question being your trusty Amiga 500, of course. Because if you take it along to your local stockist and trade it in, we'll exchange it for a new generation Amiga CDTV multi-media computer pack for only £399.99.* That's £200 less than the normal retail price. And remember, that includes an Amiga CDTV player with keyboard, mouse, floppy disc drive and a 12 month warranty - the whole shooting match. This fantastic offer to our Amiga customers closes at the end of September. So hurry, as they say, while stocks last. And don't forget the plastic.



Monitor not included

AMIGA CDTV

*TRADE-IN MACHINES MUST BE COMPLETE AND IN WORKING ORDER. OFFER ENDS 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992. AVAILABLE AT SELECTED HIGH STREET STORES INCLUDING DIXONS AND SPECIALIST INDEPENDENTS. FOR DETAILS OF YOUR LOCAL STOCKISTS CALL FREE ON 0800 686868.

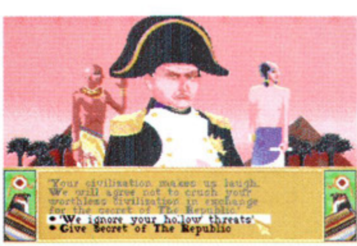


AMIGA FORMAT Annual '93

Any questions? Write in and win

£1,500 prize draw







Zool, Civilization and *Archer Maclean's Pool,* all up for grabs if you write in.

Now's your chance to make your voice heard and win a share in more than £1,500 worth of games software. We're putting together the *Amiga Format Annual 1993* and want to know what you think about life, the Amiga and everything. It's going to be *your* annual and a platform for you to make your views known, and to have a crack at winning six superb Amiga games if you do so.

First off, ask a question. Go on, any question you've ever wanted to ask about the Amiga, about software, hardware, the companies and personalities that make up the world of the Amiga. We'll take your questions to the people in the know and get the answers for you. Anything from Jeff Minter's llama fixation to Commodore's plans for the next model of Amiga, write in, we'll get the answers and publish them in a special *Annual* readers' panel feaure.

In return, we've a few questions for you. What's your favourite game, the best piece of graphics software, the best accelerator, graphics card, memory expansion or other upgrade you've ever used? And what's the best peripheral – be it a printer, floppy or hard drive, scanner, mouse, joystick or whatever – you've ever come across? Write in and vote so we can reveal your preferences in our *Amiga Format Annual* Readers' Poll, and so that you have the chance to win a prize.

Ten entries will be pulled out of the hat and, if your name's on one of them, you'll win a superb games seven-pack featuring MicroProse's Sid Meier classic *Civilization*, Virgin's *Archer Maclean's Pool*, Gremlin's all-action *Zool* and *Lotus 3*, Renegade's footie frenzy *Sensible Soccer*, Millennium's latest James Pond adventure *The Aquatic Games*, plus the one you've all been waiting for, Psygnosis' *Lemmings 2*.

But you'd better hurry. The closing date is September 30, 1992, so get those questions and votes coming. Send your polling form to *Amiga Format Annual 1993*, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2DL.

The winners will be announced at the Future Entertainment Show at Earls Court on November 5-8 and, if you can't make tha, we will also be publishing them in the December issue of *Amiga Format*.

The *AMIGA FORMAT* Annual 1993

The *Amiga Format Annual* is on sale soon and will bring you all the big stories from a turbulent year in the Amiga's history, a look ahead to what's coming up in '93 and all the behind-the-scenes info on the world of the Amiga.

Along with your votes on top Amiga products and the answers to incisive reader questions, we'll be making our own recommendations on all the top-performing hardware and software – products destined for the ultimate accolade, the *Amiga Format* Hall of Fame.

There'll also be in-depth coverage on the Amiga's makers Commodore, informed opinion from leading software and hardware manufacturers, a look at how *Amiga Format* itself comes to you every month... The question is, how are we going to fit it all in?

Find out when the *Annual '93* hits the newsagents on October 22. At only £3.95, it's an absolute must buy!

Now cast your votes.

What's your favourite game? Which graphics package do you think is the best? Business software includes word processors, spreadsheets, databases and integrated packages – which is the most useful? Other software could include music, pools prediction, programming, comms, anything you like. And what's the handiest utility you've come across?

On the hardware side, have you been impressed by an upgraded Amiga? Name that upgrade. Are you bowled over by your mouse, joystick, printer or other peripheral? Tell us. Let's find out once and for all what everybody raves about.

PRIZE DRAW – THE RULES

1 Employees of Future Publishing and software houses donating prizes may not enter the draw.
2 Multiple entries are not allowed.
3 The editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into.

AMIGA FORMAT ANNUAL 1993 Reader Awards

Best game: ____________

Best graphics software: ____________

Best business software: ____________

Best leisure software: ____________

Best utility: ____________

Best hardware upgrade: ____________

Best peripheral: ____________

Name: ____________

Address: ____________

____

____

Postcode: ____________

Telephone no: ____________

Send this coupon to *Amiga Format Annual 1993*, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2DL

The question I've always wanted to ask is: ____________

____

____

caboodle costs only £70. *Smoothtalker* is a teleprompting package that scrolls text written in a word processor across the screen under control of a remote control box that lets you speed up, slow or stop the motion. It can also display mirror image text with a reversed font, and ZEN can supply the *RevFont* program to convert a font to mirrored text. Using this facility, you can reflect the screen display on gless and read as you look into the camera. The *Smoothtalker* program costs £120 plus VAT and a demo video showing *Smoothtalker* in use is available for £3.00.
ZEN Computer Services 061 793 1931

LIGHTS, SOUND, ACTION!

Here's a unique innovation in the Amiga market. Phoenix Micrographics, based in Australia, have come up with the Aladdin Lighting Control System, a complete lighting and design control console on a card to slot inside an Amiga. Capable of controlling full professional lighting rigs, this sytem would also be eminently suited to smaller-scale theatre and hall uses, such as in schools. The features of the system are far too numerous to mention here: full details from Phoenix at 18 Hampton Rd, Keswick, South Australia 5035: tel 08 293 8752, fax 08 293 8814.

KIDS WOT CAN'T SPEL

Illiteracy and bad spelling are huge problems in modern society – you should see our freelancers' copy! Europress Software, makers of the top-selling *Fun School* educational series, are bringing out a new educational package called *Spelling Fair* which they believe can help teach correct spelling. Designed by the *Fun School* team, it follows the tried and tested method of using fun little games to make its point and is aimed at the 7-13 age group. It includes a 3,000-word dictionary that ensures 'problem words' identified by teachers are tested. Out this month, it costs £25.99.
Europress Software 0625 859333

MOLE IN A HOLE

The classic children's book *Wind in the Willows* has been adapted into an educational game for the Amiga by School Software. It's designed to teach basic English in a fun way, hiding the learning in the disguise of a simple educational adventure game in which the child plays the part of Mole. The player must collect relevant passwords, choose the correct route and interact with the various characters. The aim of the game is to improve reading and creative writing skills, as well as introducing children to computers. It will cost £22.95.

FASHION DESIGNER

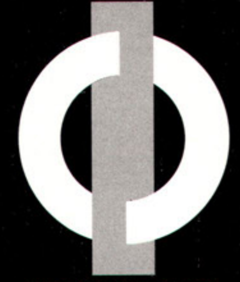
Ever wanted to turn one of your own Amiga-generated images into a full-colour T shirt? Studio 101 have been doing this sort of thing for a year now and are celebrating their birthday with some special prices. From any IFF or HAM image, including 24-bit, they can produce you a T shirt in medium, large or extra large for £10.99. They also do prints on paper at A4 or A3 size and prints as OHP (overhead projector) slides.
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Distant Suns new version!!..........£34.99
GB Route Plus..........£54.99

It's here, you can buy it, and it really works! The A570 CD-ROM turns your Amiga into a CDTV, and then some. **Neil Jackson** examines Commodore's new box of tricks.

A570 CD Interface

CD-ROM drive ■ £349 ■ Commodore



Commodore's A570 CD-ROM drive is here at last. The price looks right, the manual is readable and reasonable, and there's loads of software due to appear soon. Can anything go wrong?

AT LONG LAST, the widget we've all been waiting for has arrived! The A570 CD-ROM drive is a plug-in unit which fits into the Amiga 500's left-hand expansion slot. It comes with its own power supply (exactly the same as the one you use with an A500), an audio cable for connecting to your A500's audio outputs, a disc caddy for holding CDs while they're in the drive, and a reasonably well put together manual.

Commodore have obviously taken care to make sure that the case makes some attempt to follow the A500's styling, but because the CD drive inside is fairly blocky, it can't really match it. The front panel contains two LEDs, one for the power supply and one which shows accesses being made to the CD (just like your A500's drive light).

The only problem is their location: they're just below the drive-slot, under a protruding edge which obscures the LEDs when you're sat at your normal typing position. To see them, you need to lean back a fair distance in your seat, or type with your arms outstretched. It's a stupid oversight, but it doesn't really matter – you can't damage a CD by ejecting it mid-access, like you can with a floppy.

On the same panel is the headphone socket and switch which enables you to listen to the CD in private. It uses the quarter-inch jack standard, like the ones found on household hi-fi equipment. Personal stereo headphones will need a special 3.5mm to quarter-inch adaptor.

The switch controls two functions – and this is bound to lead to some confusion in the first few uses if you're not paying attention. The main function is to control the headphone volume level, but if you turn the knob all the way down, it goes click and turns off the A570 unit itself. This function is included to stop you from having to unplug the A570 whenever you want to run your Amiga in normal (non-Compact Disc, CD-ROM) mode. The really dumb thing here is that there is no (obvious at least) indication on the switch. Nine times out

CDTV DISCS

The A570 CD Interface runs CDTV (which is Commodore's own Dynamic Total Vision system) applications. Running CDTV programs is the A570's prime function, so you would expect this to be easy, and it is!

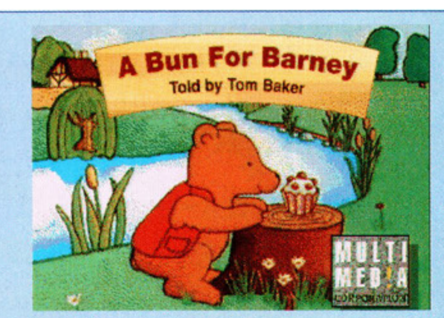
You simply put the CDTV disc into a caddy (a disc holder which is supplied with the A570) and slide that into the A570. After a moment's whirring, the CDTV program is up and running; it's as if your Amiga was a CDTV player. The only major difference is the lack of a CDTV infra-red controller interface in the drive. However, with a little practice on your part, the keyboard and mouse can usually be made to mimic the controller.

The movement of the mouse usually corresponds to the CDTV's joypad movement (though this is often scaled up and very fast), and the mouse left and right buttons equal button A and button B on the CDTV.

With a few of the earliest CDTV discs (which were designed purely for the original CDTV player only), you may experience problems. Some key-combinations may be a bit awkward at first, or the arrow keys won't work properly, but there are ways around all of these problems.



Standard CDTV discs can be yours (and your Amiga's) but watch out for those made for early versions of CDTV.



Dear old Barney, early CDTV software that came from the US is rapidly being complemented with spiffy new stuff.

Often, the Amiga's perennial drive-clicking problem can make things look worse than they actually are: the drive-click somehow causes the mouse pointer to move very slightly (you may have noticed this before). This in turn is interpreted by the CDTV application as a movement of the controller joypad, causing the screen to change before you're ready. This problem, once spotted, is easily cured: pop a disk in your Amiga's disk drive(s) and the drive-click (and mouse-movement) stops.

Many newer CDTV applications detect the fact that they're running on A570s and



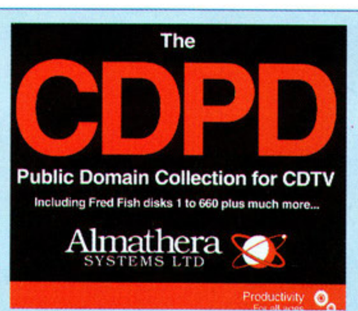
of ten, you'll probably never need to turn the volume down to zero anyway, so it doesn't really matter – it's just that Commodore seem to have set themselves up for a Technical-Support headache – some people are bound to complain that their A570s are not working when in reality they're just not switched on!

At the rear of the A570 there's a block of four RCA phono sockets where the audio leads plug in, a power supply socket and a curious blanking-plate held down by a single screw. The audio leads are simple to set up – you just route your A500 output to the A570 audio inputs using the lead supplied, and then plug your normal audio leads into the A570 outputs. The A570 audio outputs are then mixed on to the Amiga's output before being sent to the TV or monitor speaker. Under the curious blanking-plate is a 30-pin slot intended for use with hard drives (though there's no way you can use the A570 with a GVP IMPACT drive because the A570 has no Amiga-style expansion slot itself).

Inside the A570, there's a second 40-pin connector where you can fit up to 2Mb of fast RAM. This is currently of little use because most CDTV programs expect no fast RAM at all – but it may become useful if future CDTV titles are written exploit it. Fast RAM aside, the A570 requires a full megabyte of chip RAM to be inside your Amiga. The original CDTV came with this amount, so most CDTV programs assume that this amount is always fitted. However, chip RAM trapdoor expansions are widespread and reasonably cheap – and A500 Plus Amigas come with a full megabyte of chip RAM as standard.

It's easy to look at the A570 and think 'well, there's really not much call for it at the moment – but it's a nice idea'. While this is partially true (it *is* a nice idea), the A570 has a lot to offer, and hopefully very soon. Now that it's in production, CDTV publishers will incorporate the A570's features and exploit its different input modes.

Soon, we should see a new age of far more spectacular CDTV software, and that's when the fun will begin. For now, there are lots of uses you can already put your A570 to, but the best is still to come. White elephant? We don't think so: CDTV already has a head start over Philips' CD-I, and it's just beginning to look like a capable format. For £350, the A570 is a neat (and not terribly expensive) method by which to increase the enjoyment you get from your Amiga. And, if people move toward it now, then software houses will be forced to develop even more programs for it.



And this is what you get free with the A570. Over 600 Mb of Amiga Public Domain software for you.

provide simple keyboard alternatives which are reliable and quick – presumably future releases will be able to positively exploit the fact that they're running on a real Amiga by providing more options than you would find on a CDTV.

AUDIO CDS



The A570 plays ordinary audio CDs (the kind you'd buy in your average high-street record shop). It uses a typical CD-player front-panel display, incorporating all the standard features common on most hifi systems and ghetto-blasters: random play, repeat tracks, play any selected list of tracks, show the time elapsed, time left to play, and so on. There's really nothing missing – the CD-ROM functions just like the real thing. You don't have to put up with TV-quality sound though: you can plug the stereo outputs directly into a household amplifier and have stereo CD-quality sound pouring out of your normal record-player speakers.

CDS WITH GRAPHICS

The A570 plays CD+Gs (the new type of CDs which have a graphics track: you can buy these from record stores too). You play these discs like normal audio CDs, but you have the option to turn on the graphics track and watch it while the music plays. The graphics aren't usually stunning, but often they display the lyrics of the song you're listening to. This can be a giggle, as any closet air-guitarist will tell you. Occasionally you'll see the odd digitised photo of an artiste, or a scenic backdrop here and there – but it's nowhere near the same standard as music videos – well not quite yet.

CDS WITH MIDI



The A570 plays CD+MIDIs. These are similar to CD+Gs but instead of a graphics track they have an MIDI data track. This data can be sent to a MIDI keyboard (or some other MIDI sound-source) and the music is played through it, in synch with the CD audio track. Nice, if you've got some MIDI equipment and a MIDI adaptor for your Amiga already.

CD-ROM DISCS

The A570 can access ISO (International Standards Organisation) -9660 CD-ROM discs. One of the great buzzwords of the moment, CD-ROM is a computer industry standard for data storage on CDs. That's it – it doesn't necessarily mean that you'll be able to use all CD-ROM-based data (which could be pictures, sounds, programs, or anything really) on your Amiga. Currently much of the data stored in CD-ROM format is for the IBM PC, but there are a few things currently available for the Amiga. For example *The CDPD* collection contains more than 600 Mb of Public Domain software. This data can be copied, or run from the A570 using Workbench or Shell, as if it was on floppy. Even CD-ROMs designed for the PC can be interesting to play with. You can use the Shell to examine the CD's directory and often you'll find files stored as ASCII or *DPaint* ILBM or IFF format. You can glean heaps of information from your average PC CD-ROM – you just won't be able to run the handler program that manages the data and helps you to search through it.

Commodore A570 CD Interface

SPEED ●●●●●
Fast loading times as you'd expect, but the quick and easy installation is a nice bonus.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●●
The manual is surprisingly clear and easy to follow. It explains everything you need to know.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
It couldn't be much simpler – most of the time it's just plug-in and go.

FEATURES ●●●●
Very versatile, capable of playing a number of different CD types. The casing design is poor.

VALUE ●●●●●
At £349, including the CD-PD disc, it's not bad. However, expect price cuts before too long.



Amiga CD at a glance

When buying an A570 CD interface for your A500, the important thing to consider is the quality of software available. To help you out, here's what we think of every CDTV disc released, along with sage words by **Damien Noonan** on why Amiga CD is so important to you.

THERE IS NOW absolutely no doubt that compact discs will take over as the main, possibly the only, format on which you will be able to buy games. It may well happen inside three years.

Floppy disks, with their limits on how much data can be stored, their delicacy as a storage medium and the high incidence of piracy, are quite definitely on the way out. You may find that hard to accept, but you might as well get used to it.

The cartridges used by Sega and Nintendo, which use a ROM (read only memory) chip to store the games, are not an alternative, despite the 'credit card' slot on the A600 which many people originally believed Commodore had included to encourage cart software for the Amiga. It's almost certain that Sega and Nintendo themselves will be forced to abandon cartridges.

When we interviewed Commodore UK's new MD, Kelly Sumner, in last month's issue, it became quite evident that Commodore were putting their efforts behind making CD the sole format. Since then, we have spoken to leading people at many of the UK's top software houses, and they agree that CD is the way to go.

Cartridges are expensive and also very slow to make. The high initial cost means that games cost the consumer a lot to buy, but they also mean that software houses have to be very careful about how many copies of a game they 'print'. If they do too many and the game doesn't sell as well as they predicted, the leftovers can easily wipe out the profit. If they do too few, on the other hand, it takes too long to get any more made, so they might as well forget it.

Compact discs, on the other hand, cost comparatively little to produce and can be run off very, very quickly indeed. This takes a lot of the risk out of the equation for the software publishers, so they will more easily make a profit, and it also means the retail price of games will come down. There is a wide commitment in the software industry to reduce the price of new games to £20 – half the price of many cartridge games.

Compact disc will be important in other ways too. The massive amount of storage space – around 650 Megabytes – makes amazing things possible, not only in games but also in book-like 'reference' works, 'multimedia' projects and the 'edutainment' type of disc which will inevitably become increasingly important to the development of the computer as a family entertainment machine.

In just under two years' time, the effect of the MPEG (Motion Picture Expert Group) chip-set will begin to be seen in all kinds of computer software, games included. This industry-standard system makes it possible for computers to use what's known as FMV: full-screen, full-motion video.

In other words, complete, full-colour, moving video images will be included. Only CD has the kind of storage capacity needed for FMV – a CD can store 78 minutes of video. Apart from being able to watch *Terminator 4* off a CD played on your CD Amiga, this will also mean LucasArts (as Lucasfilm Games are now known) will be able to make *Monkey Island 4* with real actors, as if it were a film.

The CD Amiga, whether it's a CDTV or an A500 with an A570 attached, is the first home computer that has brought this new technology to the UK consumer. In other words, we're in an extremely privileged position.

Other computers and consoles have featured CD storage, but were in the wrong place at the wrong time – one memorable example is the NEC PC Engine console, which had a CD drive four years ago but never really took off. Commodore argue that in a few years' time, all hardware manufacturers will have to compete with the CD Amiga.

Currently, to buy a Sega or Nintendo console costs very little (it's believed that the 16-bit Super NES console may be reduced in price to under £100 before Christmas). But cartridges cost around £40 per game, and by taking a loss on the hardware Sega and Nintendo can make money back on every cartridge sold because they are the only ones allowed to manufacture cartridges, and they take a cut.

Commodore believe that when they are forced to make machines that run from CD, manufacturers like Sega and Nintendo will not be able to take a cut on the software and will have to sell machines at a more realistic price. Which could leave the Amiga competing directly with the games consoles, and even winning.

So here we sit, at the gateway to a new era for the home computer, in the unique position of being able to have tomorrow's technology today. Your only problem is that when it's today's technology, it may be a lot cheaper. Is £349 too much to pay for a stake in the future and the knowledge that you are a pioneer?

In the end, it still comes down to what you can do if you spend your £349. Which is why, once more, we're taking a look at all the Amiga CD discs we can get our hands on.

Without wishing to pre-empt the reviews that follow, I think it's probably still not quite time to buy an A570 unless you want to 'be the first kid on your block' to own one. There are two things we still need. One, a CD title that everyone should own; something so good that you absolutely have to have it; which couldn't be done on any other format. I suspect that's on the way.

Two, we need to know that we can actually buy the new releases on CD, so Commodore making a major effort to persuade software houses to manufacture CD versions of all new releases is going to be a very important factor in the format's future.

On the other hand, with every A570 you get the PD CD-ROM disc, with more than 600 floppies' worth of programs on it. When you consider that lot could cost well over £1,000 to buy as individual disks, that must show you something. ➧

TRIVIAL PURSUIT

DOMARK **£49.99**

This and the *Guinness Book of Records* are probably the two most important titles for CDTV and the Amiga. The scale of this enterprise is unique: it comes on two CDs, which is a monster amount of data.

The essence of play is the same as the famous culture-changing board game: six players move round a board and answer questions in six different categories. Good die throws and good answers are both needed to win. Inevitably, the basic game structure had to address handling whose turn it is, the die-throwing and question-asking. But in all aspects, the way it has been done leaves room for some improvement.

A chirpy cartoon character has been chosen as game-show host and is predictably irritating. Clips of animation and real speech are used to swap from player to player and keep the game moving, and after you've heard all three speech clips prompting you to roll the die, they do nothing but hold up the game and irritate the players.

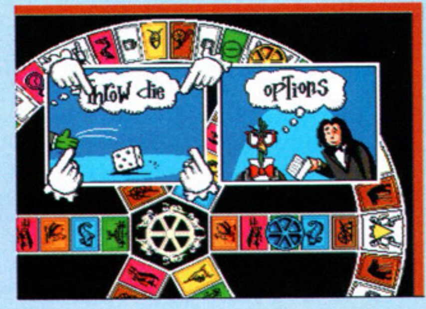
The die roll has been really badly done, with a slow animation and a painful over-mixed sound effect making every roll of the computer-generated random number an endurance test, not a moment of excitement. Even though the process can be speeded up, it's still a badly implemented idea.

Each time you reach a new category of question, a host for that category is introduced. The cartoon characters used might amuse you first time through, if you like Bob Monkhouse's jokes, but of course the second time you play they are nothing but an irritation.

All the questions are accompanied by a picture of some vague relevance, but here too an opportunity is missed; an interactive CD version of the game could have added questions like "who painted this picture?" and "name this tune". Instead, too many are just word-based and the pictures are mostly irrelevant.

When you've got an answer you are happy with, you are expected to click as button to see if you're right and then to click on 'yes' or 'no' when asked "did you get it right?" which is somehow completely unsatisfying.

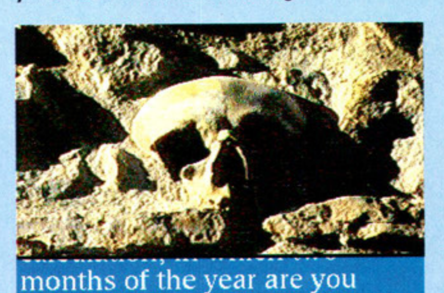
All in all, there is the same fun board game underneath, but doing it all via your telly seems to take something away from the game as a social activity (it's always fun asking questions when you're playing the board game) which it can't replace by clever-clever presentation. Add in a substantially higher price and, sadly, you're on to a loser.



The traditional *Triv* board layout is retained and supplemented by cartoony icons.



And here is your host, an animated bird whom you'll want to throttle before long.

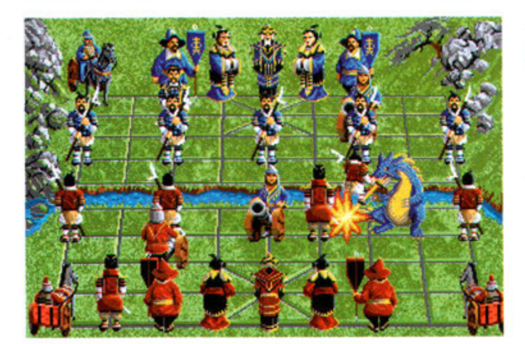


Just one of the many picture-based questions. This one's probably about the bird's predecessor.



BATTLECHESS

INTERPLAY **£39.99**



This is a classic computer games and an obvious choice for the CD format. It's essentially a very simple chess game and, unlike some other chess games, it has very few options for changing the way you play: no ancient, historical versions of chess and no expert tutorials to add 'grand master' expertise. Its gimmick, as the name suggests, is nice animation in which the pieces do battle and the taking piece defeats the other. It plays a very good game of chess, but it's a very aged game. A CD title might be expected to give more.

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 75%

LEMMINGS

PSYGNOSIS **£34.99**

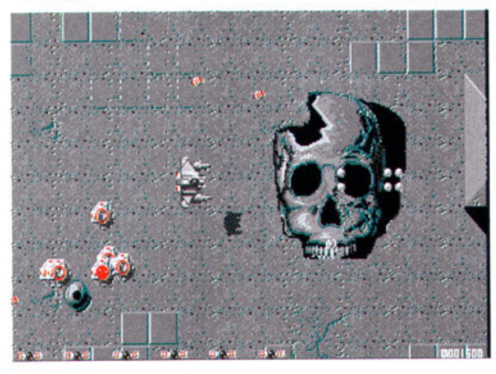
Lemmings, two years on, undoubtedly still deserves to be called the classic Amiga game – if you don't already have a copy, you should definitely get it. The only problem is that it's no use playing it with a CDTV remote control: the notchy, slow motion of the pointer makes levels that require fast action as well as brain-power almost un-doable.

It's also a shame that it has had no enhancement: the original Amiga tunes, while irritatingly catchy, do sound a bit out of place and the wasted strips of screen make it seem less than the polished and league-leading game it should be.

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 75%

BATTLESTORM

TITUS **£29.99**



An average shoot-em-up transferred direct from the Amiga. You control a spaceship and attempt to destroy bases on a large multi-directional scrolling map with many enemies making life difficult. It's not a great game and has no enhancements for the CD version.

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 37%

CASINO GAMES

SAEN SOFTWARE **£24.99**



A rather sorry compilation of three arcade games: a fruit machine simulator, a roulette gambling game and a sort of poker. A choice of music tracks is available, but makes no difference to the poor games. There's better stuff available in the public domain

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 21%

CHAOS IN ANDROMEDA

ON-LINE **£29.99**



A sc-fi adventure in which you wander the surface of a planet solving mysteries. From the start, it's off-putting because you have to go through an unnecessary rigmarole setting up your character. Even when you get into it there's none of the fascination that makes you want to explore. Professional presentation; amateur ideas.

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 33%

continued on page 38



THE FINAL CHALLENGE

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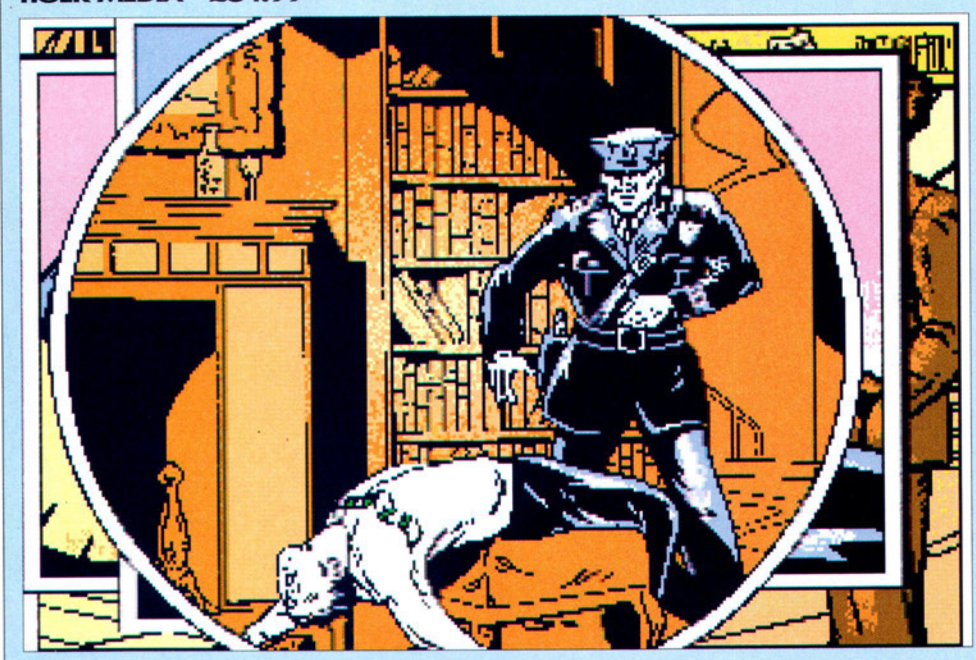




Magnetic Field Software Design

CASE OF THE CAUTIOUS CONDOR

TIGER MEDIA £34.99



Lush graphics and sound make *Case of the Cautious Condor* a cinematic marvel, but the gameplay has its limitations. Yet another case of good looks but a lack of substance. Even so, it pushes the CD medium in the right direction.

Of all the games available for CDTV, this one already has the best reputation, It's something that could not possibly be done on floppy disks because its major appeal is massive quantities of gorgeous cartoon graphics – the intro sequence is an amazing 15-minute cartoon film.

Essentially it's a detective adventure game in which you have to guess the identity of the murderer by wandering around the rooms, eavesdropping on conversations and looking for clues. Unfortunately, the main game mechanic is the strict time limit, so your impetus for having another game is frustration at not finding out whodunnit on your last go, and it's not as much fun to play as it is to watch. But it's still a pace-setter that shows what masses of storage can do for graphics and sound.

Amiga Format Verdict 79%

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

CINEMAWARE £29.99



A strange game, the main appeal of which is attractive graphics, now enhanced by real sound off CD. It was considered a classic four years ago but hasn't stood the test of time simply because the gameplay is somewhat feeble. You play a knight wrestling with a combination of strategy/management tasks (looking after food, training armies, invading neighbouring English counties) and arcade-style action, with some rather dull little joystick-waggling sub-games in which you battle into a castle or compete in a jousting tourney. *Defender of the Crown 2* is soon to follow, and will cost you a fiver more.

Verdict – Amiga Format rating 48%

FALCON

MIRRORSOFT £49.99



Possibly one of the most famous flight sims ever released, and this complete version comes with all the missions that were originally available on separate disks. It always was a good game and is little changed for CDTV – the only use of audio CD capabilities is for 'radio contact' messages in real speech, which do add an extra layer of realism to the atmosphere. Inevitably, in a form intended to be played from a keypad, control is simplified, which gives a more combat-game feel. It's still great fun, but is no longer the best flight sim around and has not been radically updated for CD.

Verdict – Amiga Format rating 75%

HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

ON-LINE £29.99



This offering aims to present the Conan Doyle classic using a form of presentation pioneered by books in the Fifties: take the book apart and let the reader reassemble it by reading appropriate parts and by following clues. The end result fails almost utterly. It becomes a book which you must read as reams of on-screen text. The tale is not made any more intriguing by the fact that it is split into pieces and read to you by a hi-fi-sound narrator. It really is a load of rubbish and completely misses the potential of CD as a vehicle for interactive *entertainment*.

Verdict – Amiga Format rating 12%

MIND RUN

CREALUDE £29.99



The French are renowned for coming up with particularly odd computer games, and this little collection of memory and IQ tests lives up to the Gallic stereotype by presenting itself with terminally weird, Salvador Dali-style surrealist graphics. Underneath the surface gloss lurks a bunch of games reminiscent of the puzzles you'd expect to find in daily newspapers and are too feeble to be of any real fun. *Mind Run 2* is set to follow and is not expected to be anything else but more of the same.

Verdict – Amiga Format rating 32%

PSYCHO KILLER

ON-LINE £29.99

If CD has the potential to bring us interactive movies, then *Psycho Killer* would just about qualify as the interactive home video. Its graphics were shot on location in the London area and digitised, which has the unfortunate side effect of making it look like a movie in which Vauxhall Chevettes and anoraks appear when there should be Ferraris and Armani suits. The major let-down is the gameplay: you flick through screens where nothing happens, then come to one where you

continued on page 38

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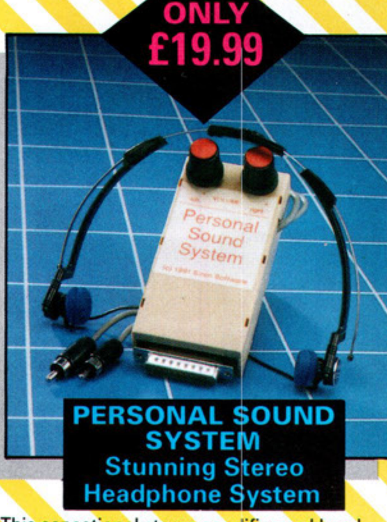
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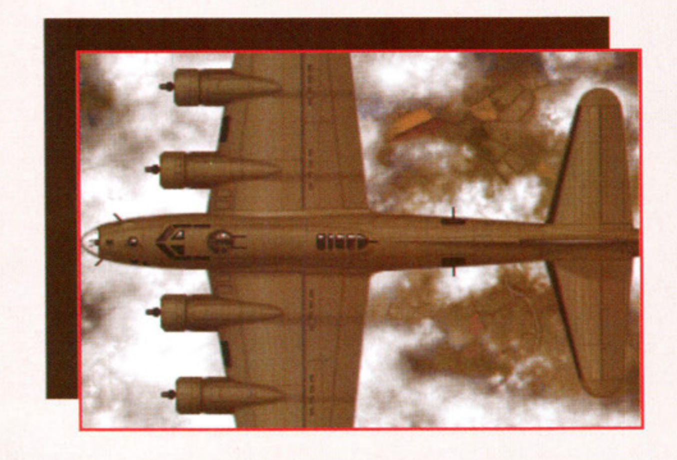
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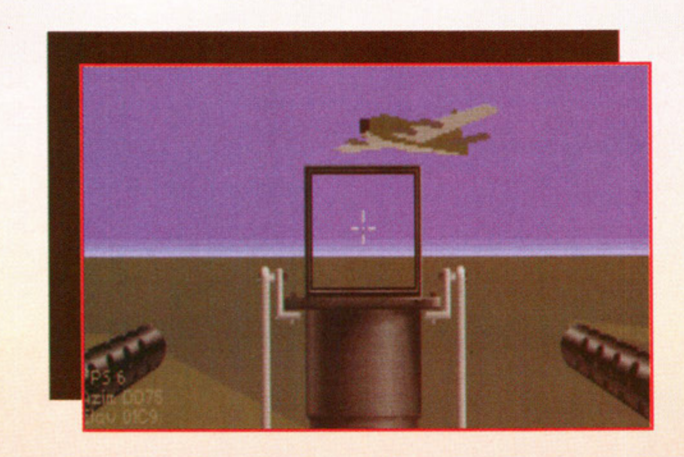


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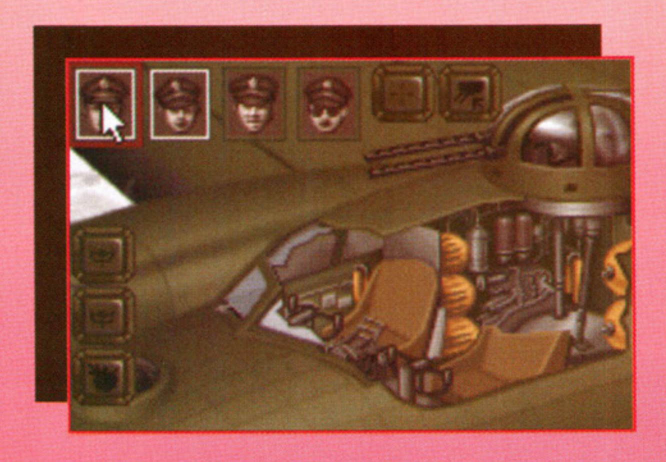
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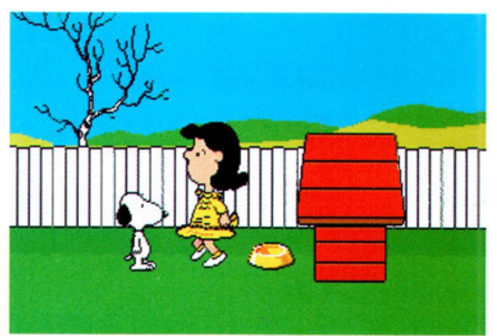


are expected to make an action by moving the pointer rapidly to part of the screen and clicking a button. Fail and you're dead, which means having to sit through the dull intro sequence again before you can take your next go. It just isn't real gameplay.

Verdict Amiga Format rating 13%

SNOOPY: THE CASE OF THE MISSING BLANKET

THE EDGE £34.99



It looks very nice, with colourful animation, so it may just appeal to the youngsters at whom it is so clearly aimed. The simple 'find object by wandering around the screens' gameplay, however, makes it a definite no-go area for anyone over 10 years and yet younger players would almost certainly find it frustrating.

Verdict Amiga Format rating 36%

TOWN WITH NO NAME

ON-LINE £29.99



On-Line continue to exploit original techniques in their efforts to produce worthy CD titles. Unfortunately, this one again falls down on gameplay. It's a cartoon adventure produced using 3D modelling techniques in which you wander into town, explore locations, find the jokes and shoot a few baddies, all of which takes half an hour or so, top. Longevity it just don't have.

Verdict Amiga Format rating 35%

SIMCITY

INFOGRAMES £29.99

Another classic now released on CD, this is probably the game that has seen most enhancement. It features a soundtrack played from hi-fi tracks on the disc, recorded specially by a band in a studio just for the game, and themed appropriately for the different parts of the game. The game itself has also been changed, with new historical scenarios (such as Wild West and Medieval), excellent new wandering monsters and a zoom mode that allows you to take a close-up look at your town.

If you aren't familiar with this one, the idea is to create a city by placing amenities (roads, housing, industry and so on) in appropriate positions and your performance is monitored by the approval of the population. You are called on to handle various crises, too. All in all, it's probably the most fun and accessible strategy game yet produced and has an aura of seriousness about the fun that makes even the most serious of parents and non-gameplayers approve.



Amiga Format Verdict 75%



SimCity may sound like a town planner's dream and a yawn-fest for the rest of us, but it's really quite bewitching.



The CD version adds a new slant to this strategy game, with ye Medieval and Wild West scenarios included y'all.

WRATH OF THE DEMON

READYSOFT £29.99



This is an arcade-style action game which looks very pretty and takes up quite some disc space with a very nice Amiga-originated animated intro, but it's rather poor all the same. The first section, for instance, is a sideways-scrolling affair in which you, as a horse rider, must jump obstacles and pick up objects that suddenly appear on the screen, which at best makes it the equivalent of a very poor shoot-em-up. Later beat-em-up levels aren't really any better, so we've yet another offering that fails to do justice to the optical storage medium. Yes, CDs can store masses of data, but that data is dull data without some thought given to its entertainment potential.

Verdict Amiga Format rating 32%

TEAM YANKEE

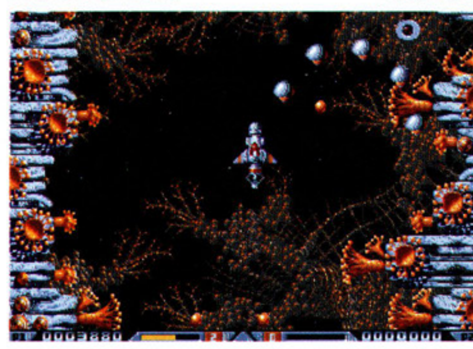
EMPIRE £29.99

A straight port from the Amiga version of the tank game in which you control a squadron of four machines in a test of strategy. It's a good game, if not a great one, with the main mechanic being control from the map of the action in the 3D game-world. It requires plenty of tactical skills which the cleverly-ramped, progressively harder levels will teach the novice tankie. The title provides fun and intelligent gameplay, but looks dated even though it's not that old.

Verdict Amiga Format rating 65%

XENON 2

MIRRORSOFT £29.99



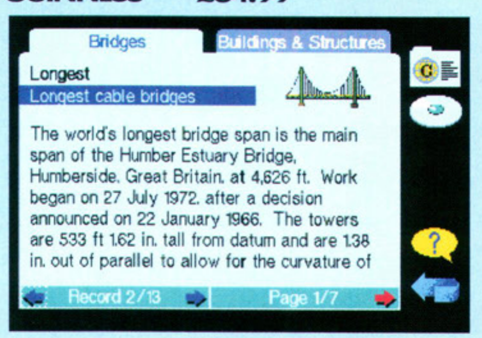
When it came out, this Bitmap Brothers up-the-screen shoot-em-up was very highly rated for its detailed graphics, action-packed gameplay, neat power-ups and innovative pop-star tie-in soundtrack. Now, the graphics look dull and the gameplay is revealed as being too enemy-heavy, with massive power-ups trying to balance play in which too little strategy and skill is required. It's been well superseded by a host of subsequent shoot-em-up releases, but set a few standards in its day. Only the soundtrack remains innovative, using the CD's sound storage capability to add a high fidelity Bomb the Bass remix track – that old *Assault on Precinct 13 Megablast* – put together in Roland's innovative 3D sound. Best bought by Bomb the Bass completists (yes, you can play CD Amiga soundtracks in a hi-fi CD player) rather than by gameplayers, it's well past its sell-by date.

Verdict Amiga Format rating 32%

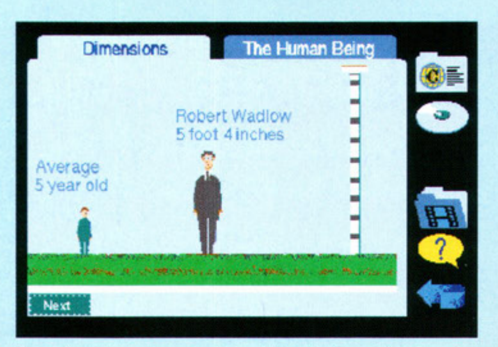
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GUINNESS DISC OF RECORDS

GUINNESS £34.99



The easy-to-use referencing system presents records of world records in a card-index style.



Browsing through particular subjects is fun and educational, but record access times are a little slow.



Many records feature animations or clips of video footage to spice up the presentation.

As big a name as the *Trivial Pursuit* game and equally important to CDTV, so it's a shame to see it fall down on a couple of small points. Essentially, you pick out records from lists of general topics and then from sub-lists of more specific topics, which makes it far easier to find what you want than does the 'here's the whole list – sort it out yourself' approach of some other discs.

Once you've found the record you want, you can read all about it and flick to other, similar records. Many of the records are accompanied by animated sequences produced on the Amiga or by digitised photographs, which spices it up a lot.

It's also possible to take a 'tour' of certain subject areas from the main menu, which gives you a narrated soundtrack using hi-fi sound and a digitised slideshow, which is quite a fun way of browsing.

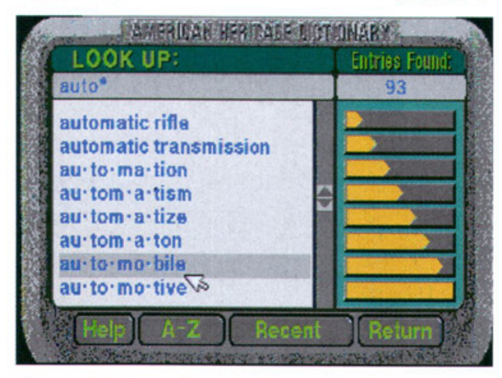
Criticisms are that record access is just a shade too slow to be comfortable and that the system of topics, lists and records can be confusing: the system of indicating when there's more to read, and the method of navigating to other similar topics is just a little too techie in look, with labels like 'List 1/4' meaning 'the first of four lists'.

On the whole, it gets the job done, but it lacks the extra sparkle and magic we were expecting and the extra polish of music. We'd like to see a new version with a bit of added glamour.



AMERICAN HERITAGE ILLUSTRATED DICTIONARY

XIPHIAS £49.99



The straightforward presentation makes it easy to look words up, and words can be spoken out loud, which is very helpful if you don't mind the American accent. What the American origins don't affect is the words – there's lots of English English, with some real slang defined as 'British, obscure'. But on the down side the pictures don't really serve any purpose and, worse still, some definitions use long words that aren't in the dictionary when you look them up.

Amiga Format rating 45%

HEROIC AGE OF SPACEFLIGHT

TROIKA £34.99

Currently unique, this is essentially a 50-minute video-on-a-disc which uses CDXL, the partial-screen full-speed animation standard on CDTV to give you a limited-colour, quarter-screen video. It's an interesting example of what digital video will bring, because you can choose any section of footage from a series of increasingly specific menus and because perfect pause is possible. If that were all, it would be rubbish – the use of limited colours makes the video look pretty ropey – but still frames can be expanded to full screen full-colour and more information in the form of text can then be called up as background, which is a hell of a powerful access system.



Amiga Format rating 55%

CONNOISSEUR FINE ART COLLECTION

LASCELLES £34.99

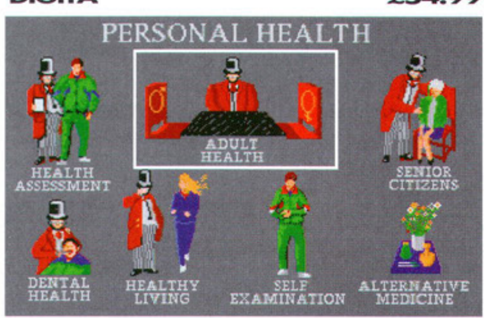
A 'coffee-table book' tour of art through the centuries, centring on digitised pictures with descriptive text and supplemented by an audio soundtrack of 10 appropriate classical music tracks. Very curious.

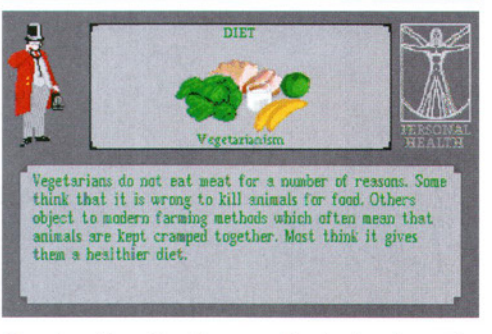


Amiga Format rating 77%

DR WELLMAN, HEALTH ADVISOR

DIGITA £54.99





Narration throughout by a professional actor and a decent presentation of information are the strong points of this medical reference title. Where it falls down ever so slightly is that it lacks the feel of absolute authority a medical guide needs – the 'well-man' pun of the title doesn't help (with apologies to the good doctor if it's a real name). We tried looking up a couple of common symptoms and got absolutely no practical help. In spite of this, it's an informative and intelligent work with some genuinely useful information and makes good use of 'hot word' cross-referencing, by which you can select a particular word and it will take you to the relevant part of the database.

Amiga Format rating 78%

continued on page 44

All photographs are of actual DCTV screens.



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- ▲ Paint, digitize and display beautiful full color composite video images on any Amiga.®*
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*Min. 1 Meg. required
3-5 Meg. recommended





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The *Gardenfax* front-end is one of the best seen on any multimedia disc, even though it looks pretty horrible. The number in the middle represents the number of plants currently under consideration: your task is to reduce the number to a manageable size by 'visiting' the options windows all round the edge of the screen and defining criteria for the plants you want.

GARDENFAX SERIES

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
GARDEN PLANTS
INDOOR PLANTS
TREES, SHRUBS, ROSES AND CONIFERS
INTERSEARCH £34.99 EACH

Four discs, each of which helps the amateur gardener pick from over 200 different plants of a particular kind. These discs are a surprise hit; they lack an awful lot of polish and look really garish and unpleasant at first glance, but they also benefit from the best multimedia presentation front-end yet devised.

Essentially, the problem with multimedia CDs is you have a hell of a lot of information stored away and you have to do two things: one, make whatever someone wants to find easy to find: two, give them interesting and sensible ways of exploring if they don't know what they want.

The *Gardenfax* system is clever. In the centre of the screen is a number which at the start represents the total number of plants on the disc. What you then do is visit menus which cover different aspects of the plant you want: light conditions, colour of flowers and so on. Each time you make a decision – it must grow in strong sunlight, it must have red flowers – the total number available is reduced, until it's down to a handleable amount and you can browse through the list and pick a plant you like.

Moreover, each plant listed has a digitised photo and also lots of information about how to grow it and look after it. To back this up there are short tutorial slideshows on particular topics, like re-potting or laying out seed rows. These discs would benefit from getting an expert artist in, but the ideas are excellent.



HUTCHINSON'S ENCYCLOPAEDIA

ATTICA CYBERNETICS £49.99

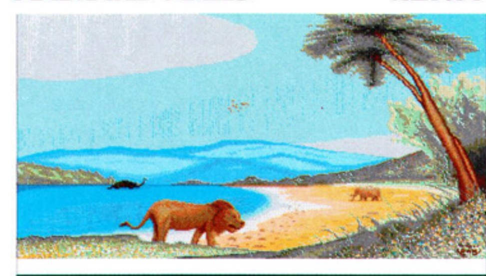
One of the discs that comes free with CDTV, this encyclopaedia suffers from poorly thought-out presentation, to the extent that a new version is supposed to be under development. The CDTV publicity made much of the fun bits, where a subject is presented with colour images and a real soundtrack, but there simply aren't enough such bits to make it impressive. This leaves a fairly basic text-led encyclopaedia in which a simple alphabetical contents list is the main way of finding a topic. Simply not intriguing enough.

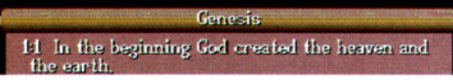
Amiga Format rating 47%

HUTCHINSON ENCYCLOPEDIA
Stonehenge
Megalithic monument dating from about 2000 BC on Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, England. It consisted originally of a circle of 30 upright stones, their tops linked by lintel stones to form a continuous circle about 30 m/100 ft across. Within the circle was a horseshoe arrangement of five trilithons (two uprights plus a lintel, set as five separate entities), and a so-called 'altar stone' - an upright pillar -
Back Fwd Picture

ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

ANIMATED PIXELS £29.99





When CDTV was first mooted, Commodore's over-the-top publicity heralded the demise of books as a medium. This is a perfect example of why that won't happen. The Bible is presented as on-screen text, never the best way to read, with poor watercolour-like illustrations. Only the word search facility really redeems what is essentially just a stupid idea.

Amiga Format rating 25%

JAPAN WORLD

GLOBAL LEARNING SYSTEMS
£49.99

Probably the best Amiga CD title to date, this exploits the potential of multimedia better than any yet released, with a superb combination of pictures, graphics and animations that makes up a highly enjoyable dip into a very different culture. Lots of fun and very educational, anyone wanting to see what the medium can do should get this.



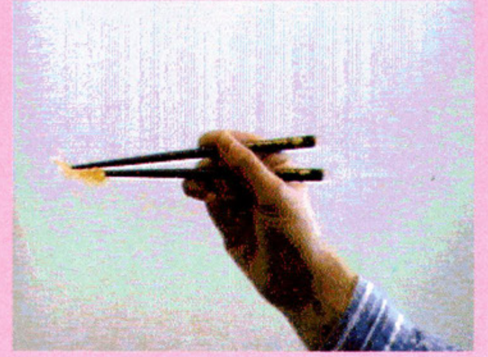
89%



One thing you might be surprised to find out about is the geography of Japan, with its chain of islands.



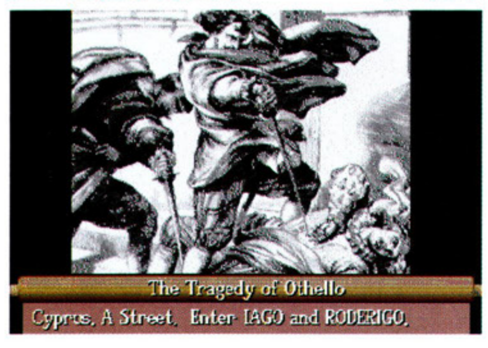
You can learn the letters of the Japanese alphabet, not just the look, but also the pronunciation.



Only the Japanese can eat potato crisps with chopsticks, but the disc shows you how to try it yourself.

ILLUSTRATED COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE

ANIMATED PIXELS £29.99



Ditto applies as to the Bible above really, except that the graphics are digitised line drawings. The fact that someone had to type in enormous quantities of text is made all too obvious by some mildly amusing mistakes. A waste of time and effort and money.

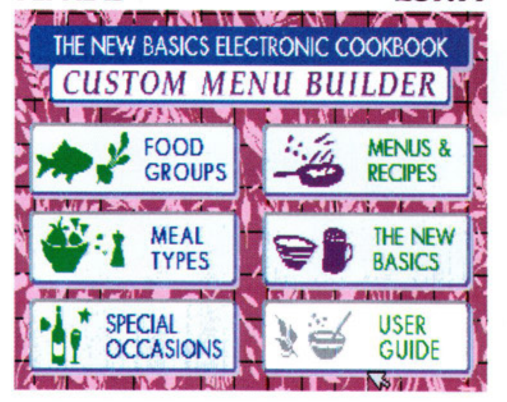




We chose 'red flowers' from the 'colour' option, 'dry' from the 'conditions' menu and 'sunny' from the 'light' menu, and this is one of the seven or eight choices we were left with. Each of our chosen plants can be viewed as a full-screen digitised image and a whole list of information about it can be scrolled through, including all the advice on planting and nurture that you would need.

NEW BASICS ELECTRONIC COOKBOOK

XIPHIAS **£39.99**



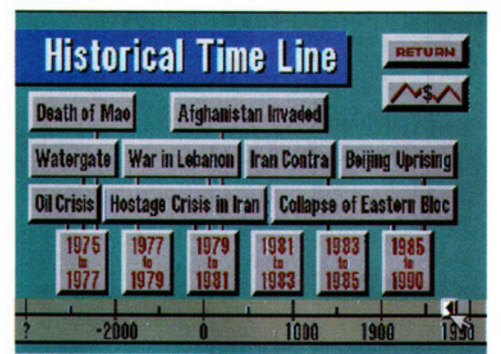
Starting off from the obvious point of being a recipe book, this useful reference work adds all sorts of clever ideas such as organising the recipes by menus or ingredients and nutritional values. What lets it all down with a whacking great thump, however, is the type of illustration used. Instead of being useful photos and diagrams of work in progress, the pictures are utterly pointless: bread, for example, is illustrated with a series of photos of different types of loaf, but with no captions. What a waste of CD's potential Better presentation could have made this title a real winner, but there's still plenty of useful info in there.

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 75%

TIMETABLE OF HISTORY: BUSINESS, POLITICS AND MEDIA

XIPHIAS **£39.99**

Two discs in this series (a third also exists, covering the arts, but we haven't yet seen it) make an interesting point: while for us, the new medium makes the way information is presented a matter of great importance, but what really counts is the information. An unwarranted American bias makes the historical information contained in this reference work very disappointing to UK audiences. If you're a student of subtle bias and propaganda, then give it a look. Its sister title, by contrast, is quite good. Both discs use a variety of techniques to give you access to topics which, frankly, don't really help. There's still a long way to go until the world learns how to do multimedia presentation of information properly.



Verdict — Amiga Format rating 45%

AMERICAN VISTA ATLAS AND WORLD VISTA ATLAS

APPLIED OPTICAL MEDIA **EACH £54.99**

The important part of an atlas is the quality of its maps, and the digitised affairs on these discs are disappointing. What's interesting about these two discs, however, is the contrast between them and the extra ideas that supplement the maps.

The United States atlas is a state-by-state tour and each state has a slideshow of attractive digitised images which go to make up a comprehensive visual tour. These go some way towards making you feel you know the place, as well as providing some surprises. It would be a great way of planning a holiday, as well as providing a good resource for geography teachers in schools.

The *World* version has less detail on each nation than the US version has on the States, but benefits from some quite excellent ideas. As well as seeing maps and flags and looking at pictures of the scenery, you can listen to the national folk music and learn a few words of the language of any country. Its problem, however, is consistency. Unless you share the views of the authors who decided a particular country was worth scarcely any coverage, you may be a little disappointed. Perhaps too ambitious – maybe a continent-by-continent series of discs, with more details and slightly better presentation, would be a winner.





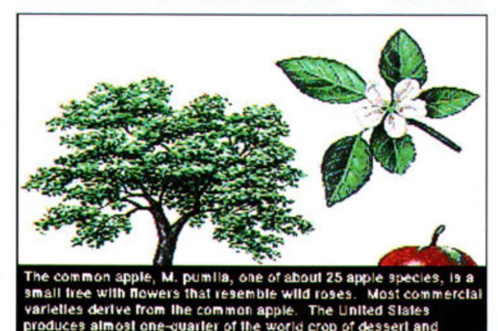
The basis of the Atlases is digitised maps like this one. They're very large scale.



In keeping with the tourist spirit, the *US Atlas* includes topographical maps of the states.

NEW GROLIER ENCYCLOPAEDIA

ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING **£39.99**

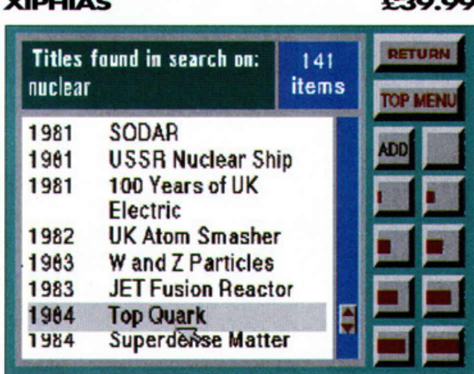


Quite apart from the fact that it does what it should – enables you to look up things to learn more about them – in a straightforward and simple way, this US reference work has one major advantage to its credit. The producers have employed an artist to originate graphics on the Amiga, meaning illustrations are available for every topic. And it all looks just great. With too many other discs, the illustrations are just thrown in to pad the thing out visually. What a pity that this disc is not available in the UK.

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 84%

TIMETABLE OF HISTORY: SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

XIPHIAS **£39.99**



With less political bias affecting the material, this makes quite a good reference work really, with lots of detail on some of the major discoveries of science through the ages. Perhaps inevitably, most of the emphasis is on the twentieth century. The flashy show-off bits, with real sound and animated video sequences, are very nice, even though most of them are related to space exploration. Inevitably, these tend to grab the attention and leave the text-only stuff looking very drab. Nevertheless, there's still plenty of good info here, making it a handy education aid.

Verdict — Amiga Format rating 70%

continued on page 50

FLIGHT FOR PC

Only you can stop the Luftwaffe

The Summer of 1940. Hitler's war machine has humbled all of Europe - except Great Britain.

Now, the all-conquering Luftwaffe plans to soften up Southern England for an invasion known as Operation Sea Lion.





Only the RAF can halt their relentless progress. The odds are stacked against them.

Now, above the Home Counties; Spitfires and Hurricanes are locked in deadly combat with Messerschmitts and Heinkels. There can only be one winner.

This is The Battle of Britain.



Graphically stunning, historically accurate and thrillingly realistic (with instant-replay feature), Their Finest Hour resets the stage for the ultimate dogfight.

One thing's certain, this Lucasfilm spectacular will provide you with many fine hours of pure entertainment.

Available on: Atari ST, Amiga and PC and Compatibles (CGA, EGA, MCGA, VGA and Tandy ® 16 colour. Requires 512k Ram. Supports AdLib™ sound card). Mouse or joystick.



LAUGHS FOR PC

Side-splitting pirate adventure

Just when you thought it was le end for LeChuck, he's back.

The legend states that "when LeChuck wants you dead, you're dead"- grim news for his old adversary, young Guybrush Threepwood.



But fear not. Big Whoop holds the key to great power. All is not lost.

In this stunning graphic sequel, young Guybrush's adventures will have you rolling in hysterics. Beware, you'll laugh so hard, milk will flow from your nose.

Behind every pirate is a really gnarly chair and in front of Guybrush is a saga so savage it'll put hairs on your chest.



With 256 colours (PC version), variable difficulty modes, interactive reggae music and "point 'n' click" interface, you'll be transported to Monkey Island in a flash.

So, brace yourself, the fun starts here. Who knows when it will stop?

Available on: Amiga (32 colours) and PC (VGA/ MCGA. Requires 640k Ram AT or compatible. Supports AdLib™, Roland™, Soundblaster™ and SoundMaster™II sound cards. Hard drive required.

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ADVENTURE FOR PC

Who can save Civilisation from destruction?

Who else? It has to be Indy.

It all began a few thousand years ago, when Atlantis sank to the ocean bed. With it, the secret of the most destructive force on earth also sank without trace. Or did it?



There it lay undisturbed for centuries. Until the Nazis rediscovered the Kingdom. Now it will only be a matter of time until they have a bomb so powerful it will draw World War II to a conclusion. Schnell!

Enter the man with the funny hat and the bull whip. Along with Sophia, his trusty side-kick, the world's future rests on their shoulders.

Is this too much to ask? No way!

Join the intrepid duo in dazzling 3D with full music and sound effects as The Fate of Atlantis and the world is decided.

So, here goes!

Available on: Amstrad and C64 Cassette & Disk, Spectrum Cassette, Atari ST, Amiga; PC and Compatibles.

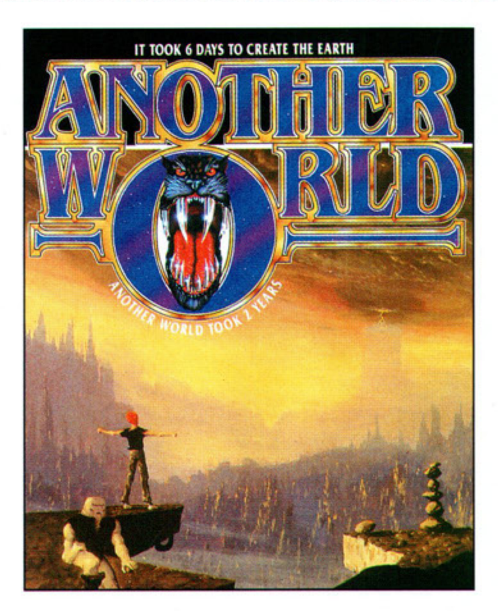


ADVENTURE FOR PC

You're about to enter "Another World"

It was a one-in-a-million chance. But it was about to happen.

Young scientist Lester Chaykin was busy experimenting in his laboratory. He'd just reached a crucial point in a test on sub-atomic particles, when zap,



a bolt of lightning struck and Lester was teleported into a different dimension. Into Another World.

He was on his own, against an unknown quantity.

From the designers of Future Wars - Another World took two years to create. And it's easy to see why.

There's zoom, panorama and close-up shots, as well as a unique polygon animation technique for fluidity.



Delphine's in-house recording studios provide the finishing touch.

Quite simply, you ain't seen nothin' yet.

Available on: Atari ST, Amiga (32 colours) & PC (CGA, EGA, VGA, Tandy ®, AdLib™ & Roland™).





A serious PC experience

SCREENSHOTS ARE ONLY INTENDED TO BE ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE GAMEPLAY AND NOT THE SCREEN GRAPHICS WHICH MAY VARY CONSIDERABLY BETWEEN DIFFERENT FORMATS IN QUALITY AND APPEARANCE AND ARE SUBJECT TO THE COMPUTER'S SPECIFICATIONS

LEARN FRENCH WITH ASTERIX 1 & 2

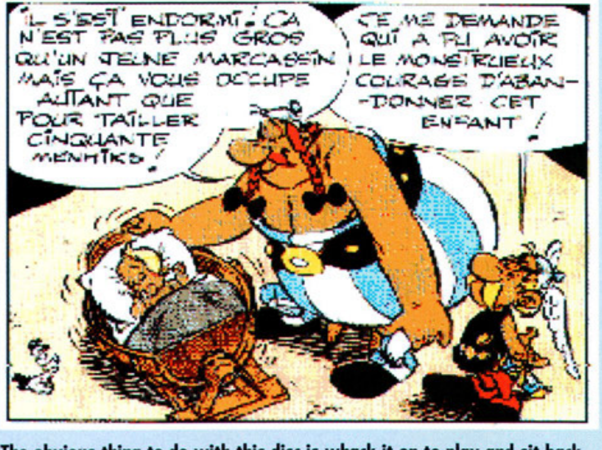
EUROTALK/MICRODEAL £34.99 EACH

A digitised cartoon book with narration in French. Essentially all it does is show you the story, narrated by actors, and allow you to play it without words on the screen or without a soundtrack.

This would be a waste of time on its own, but a new dimension is added when you use the VoiceMaster gadget to record your own attempts at speaking Francais. The mike digitises in your own speech and you can then play it back, next to the original and compare them. It makes an extraordinarily effective way of analysing how good your pronunciation is – or isn't.

The package is surprisingly good. You need both discs for the complete 'Asterix and Son' story, but each disc can stand alone. Also available soon is a Spanish version, and due out soon is another two-disc set in each language based on the *Asterix Blaxk Gold* story.





The obvious thing to do with this disc is whack it on to play and sit back to watch and listen as the story unfolds. Each frame of the cartoon-book original is represented by a full screen of the disc.

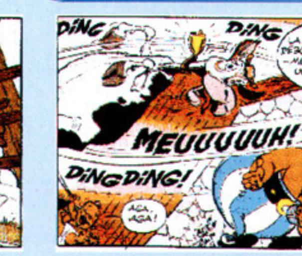
VOICEMASTER

MICRODEAL £24.99

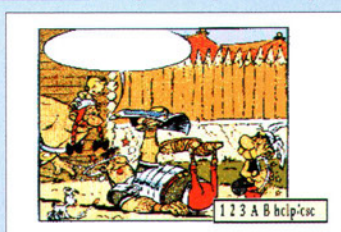
A microphone that attaches to the CDTV's serial port so you can record your voice. It's designed for use with the *Learn French with Asterix* discs.

Verdict **Amiga Format rating 80%**

Naturally, for many of us the fun is spoilt somewhat by the fact that it's in French.



So what you want to do is show it frame by frame, listen carefully and repeat.



The frames can be shown without the text in, or watched without narration.



Some frames are less useful to your learning of the French language, though!

DISCIS BOOKS SERIES

Discis produce digital versions of a number of popular childrens' storybooks, all of which use the same basic system, so before we even start looking at the individual titles, it's worth explaining here how the system works. Essentially, what you have on the screen is the left- and right-hand pages of an opened book. This has the words and the pictures, all digitised in pretty good colour from the original text and illustrations.

By clicking in the corners of the page you can turn the pages forwards and backwards and a slider at the right-hand side means you can jump around the book several pages at a time. The easiest option is to watch and listen to the whole book: a narrator speaks the story from a hi-fi soundtrack, music plays in the background and the pages of the book are turned automatically. At any time, you can jump in and stop the story, and use the other 'interactive' features of the system.

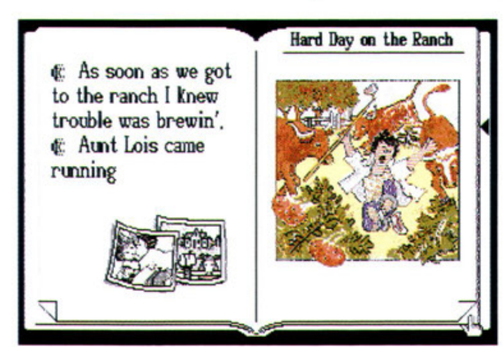
You can click on any of the words in the text to hear them spoken out loud and you can click on parts of the pictures to have whatever you've clicked on described. An option also means the story to be read in Spanish, America's second language.

This system is consistently good, though the flaw in seeing delicate watercolour illustrations in a digitised form is obvious. Inevitably, Discis books vary in appeal according to the story.

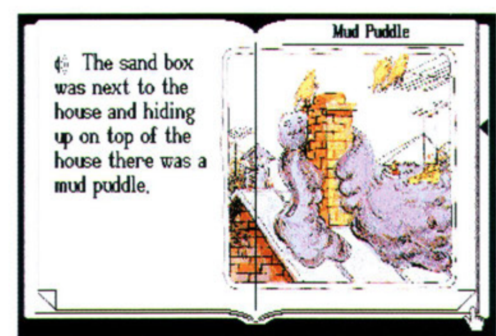
Cinderella

They all jumped up at once behind the coach and clung close together,

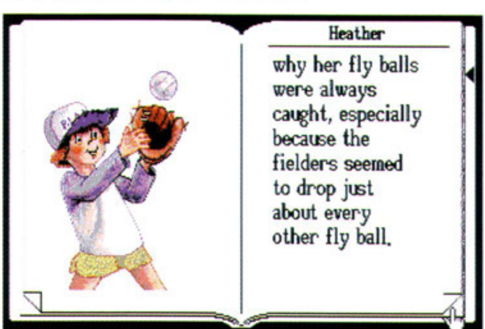
Clicking in the 'dog-eared' corners of a Discis book turns the pages backwards and forwards...



...while the slider at the right-hand edge of the book lets you move around to any part of the book you choose.



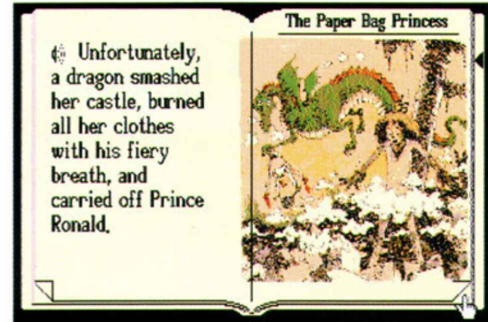
The digitised illustrations are really rather good, reproducing the watercolour originals excellently.



Clicking on words in the text means that word is spoken out loud by the narrator...



...while clicking on the pictures will bring up a one-word description of what you click on, also spoken.



This is our favourite Discis story: *Paper Bag Princess*, in which a clever girl outwits a dumb (male!) dragon.

CINDERELLA

A particularly wishy-washy and very American version of the fairy tale standard and stuffed with over-pretty characters.

 Amiga Format rating 60%

HEATHER HITS HER FIRST HOME RUN

A slightly slushy tale of American kidhood. As if you couldn't have guessed.

 Amiga Format rating 62%

A LONG HARD DAY AT THE RANCH

Another title that is just that little bit too sentimental for UK tastes, the tale of a little boy's vivid imaginative exploits.

 Amiga Format rating 64%

MOVING GIVES ME A STOMACH ACHE

One of the more charming stories, with particularly lovely pictures, and an educative angle on handling new situations.

 Amiga Format rating 70%

MUD PUDDLE

This has to be the best of the titles. Great 'I can relate to that' storyline and mercifully little sentimentality. Yet it's still very cute. So, how did you get covered in mud, then?

 Amiga Format rating 70%

PAPER BAG PRINCESS

A great little modernised fairytale with a feminist twist. Compulsory for little girls

 Amiga Format rating 70%

SCARY POEMS FOR ROTTEN KIDS

Collection of creepy-crawly rhymes is a jolly little collection. If Roald Dahl is your style of thing, this one should be right up your trouser leg.

 Amiga Format rating 75%

TALE OF PETER RABBIT (THE)

This Beatrix Potter classic stays mercifully faithful to the original – even English narration – and needs absolutely no introduction.

 Amiga Format rating 70%

TALE OF BENJAMIN BUNNY (THE)

Another relatively unspoilt Beatrix Potter classic.

 Amiga Format rating 70%

THOMAS' SNOWSUIT

Sweet American childhood tale that turns, as you'd expect, a little sickly.

Amiga Format rating 70%

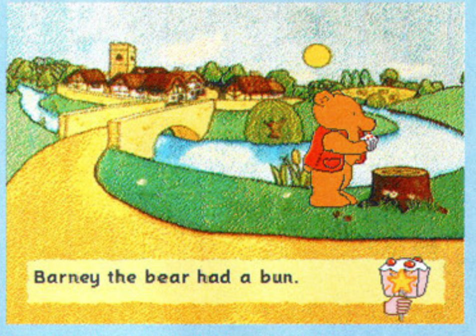
A BUN FOR BARNEY

BBC MULTIMEDIA £34.99

The narration by ex-Doctor Who Tom Baker and the lovely watercolour-like graphics in this interactive children's storybook are the icing on a very tasty cake. The whole idea of interactive multimedia seems to suit children's explorative minds incredibly well.

The idea is that the pointer can be moved around the screen and when it comes to something exciting, it flashes. A click on the button triggers off something almost magical as far as children are concerned – an animation or effect, such as crazed bunnies frolicking about like good 'uns.

Children can proceed through the storybook at their own pace, pausing to click on words on the screen so that they are read out loud. This adds an educational element which is backed up by the plot. The net result is a delightful disc, the only drawback of which is its expense.

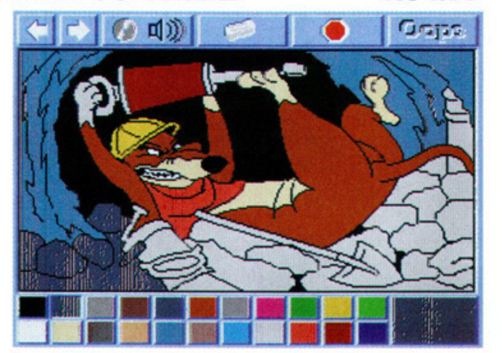


One of the best-polished CDs yet, this is an enchanting tale. If you've got kids, use them as an excuse to get it.

 79%

ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN

MERIT SOFTWARE £34.99



A colouring book based on the hit Sullivan Bluth cartoon. You flick through the line drawings to find one you like, then pick coloured pens to fill in the areas of colour. Nicely done, but ultimately simple and trivial.

Amiga Format rating 25%

FUN SCHOOL 3 (UNDER 5S)

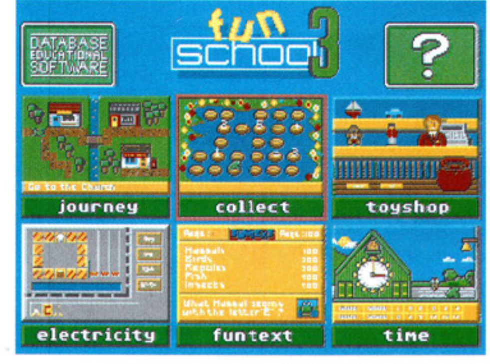
EUROPRESS £24.99

A collection of six little educational games which deal with such terribly basic concepts as numbers and letters. Kids genuinely enjoy having a bash at it and can be left to their own devices once they've mastered the mouse. Pity it's a straight Amiga port.

 Amiga Format rating 25%

FUN SCHOOL 3 (5S-7S)

EUROPRESS £24.99



This version of educational games for older kids has some more enterprising ideas, like basic electronics, and more of an emphasis on computer concepts, but overall exactly the same applies as for the Under 5's version above.

Amiga Format rating 70%

BARNEY BEAR GOES TO SCHOOL

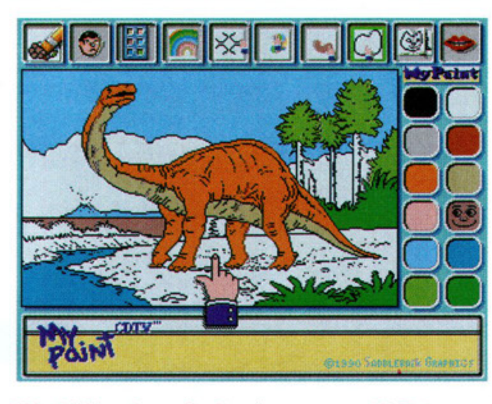
FREE SPIRIT £29.99

This is probably one of the worst programs ever. Three mouse clicks during an allegedly interactive intro get Barney out of bed and into school via a lesson on eating breakfast. At school, he can click anywhere on the blackboard to choose one of three deeply trivial 'educational' sub-games. We haven't seen companion title *Barney Bear Goes Camping* yet, but we don't really want to either.

Amiga Format rating 11%

MYPAINT

SADDLEBACK GRAPHICS £29.99



This kids' paint and colouring program *MyPaint* was great in it original incarnation on the Amiga, but fails sadly as a CDTV disc because it's very very difficult to draw freely without a mouse. When you use the CDTV remote control, all the lines end up being straight or diagonal. The CD version adds a great many more colouring book ideas, but it has to be said that the original floppy disk-based version was much better, so you'd be wise to go for that instead.

Amiga Format rating 35%

continued over

ANIMALS IN MOTION
ON-LINE **£29.99**

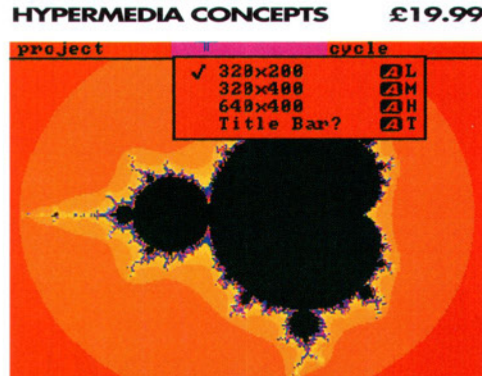


An enormous library of black-and-white digitised pictures from the works of Eadweard Muybridge, the Victorian photographer renowned for his pioneering studies of movement. Stored as Amiga IFFs and anim files, they make a useful resource for animators.



Amiga Format rating 55%

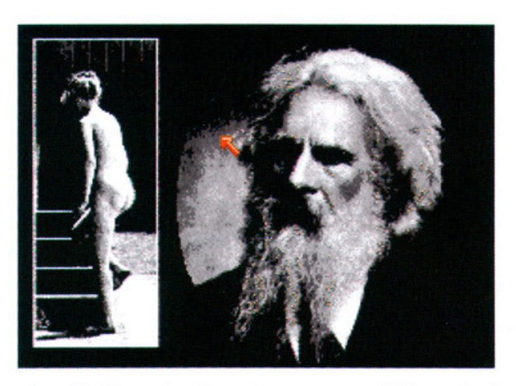
FRED FISH CD-ROM COLLECTION
HYPERMEDIA CONCEPTS **£19.99**



An enormous collection of freely distributable public domain software under the familiar Fred Fish name. If it's PD, it's probably here. This is a real treasure trove. This disc comes free with the A570 and also with CDTV from some sources.

Amiga Format rating 89%

WOMEN IN MOTION
ON-LINE **£29.99**



A collection of animated sequences of fat, naked Victorian ladies, taken from photographs by Eadweard Muybridge, who virtually invented freeze-frame photography, but was as mad as a hatter. A useful if eccentric resource for animators.

Amiga Format rating 55%

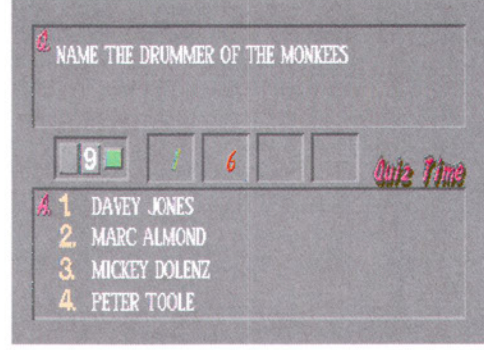
CD-REMIX 2
MICRODEAL **£29.99**



If you've ever fancied creating your own scratch mixes, you'll find this unique music system a treat. It enables you to take audio CDs from your collection and get them to play in loops and sequences so you can come up with your own remixes. It's very clever. The results are fun and effective.

Amiga Format rating 80%

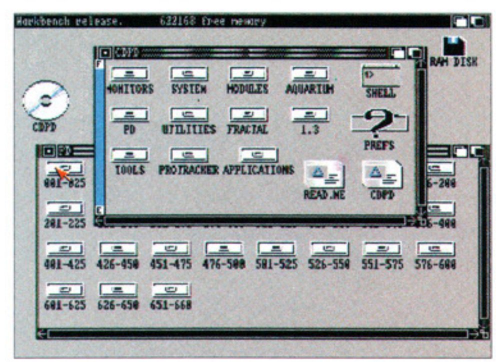
MUSIC MAKER
MUSIC SALES **£34.99**



Interactivity in the greatest-hits jukebox disc effort *Music Maker* pretty much amounts to pushing a set of buttons to play drum noises along-a-rock stars – ho hum. It's just not much fun for the price of the disk and shows itself up as one of the great mistakes of the naïve CD age.

Amiga Format rating 35%

CD-PD COLLECTION
ALMATHERA SYSTEMS **£19.99**



Free with the A570, this is essentially a UK licensed vesion of the Fred Fish Collection on CD-ROM disc. It contains the full contents of 660 Fish disks as well as a number of other utilities, such as music craetor ProTracker. It also has Workbench 2 and 1.3 installed, which makes life easier. Just has to be good value.

Amiga Format rating 89%

What to look out for...

There are lots of CD titles on the way, with a total of around 150 on Commodore's current release schedule. Here's some of the more interesting ones...

BUDGET RELEASES
Commodore expect a number of the early titles to come out soon at bargain prices and they are actively encouraging a range of £10 budget titles. This could make all the difference, because many titles are overpriced at £30 or £40 currently.

GAMES COMPILATIONS
MicroProse recently announced they would be releasing CDs with two, three or even four games on one disc, though the decision is currently under review. A compilation could store hundreds of games and we expect to see some good, value-packed compilations.

INSIGHT TECHNOLOGY
This 'how it works' book will set a new standard in the use of Amiga graphics, digitised photos and video sequences for all of its 200-odd entries on domestic technology. It should be out in the next couple of months or so.

NORTH POLAR EXPEDITION
A digitised record of Ranulph Fiennes' polar expedition presented as an interactive educational game in which you must help the party survive. It's expected to be an extraordinary event.

MUSICOLOR
A revolutionary system invented to teach music to the musically illiterate by using colour. It could bring out the potential Nigel Kennedy in all of us – if that's a good thing...

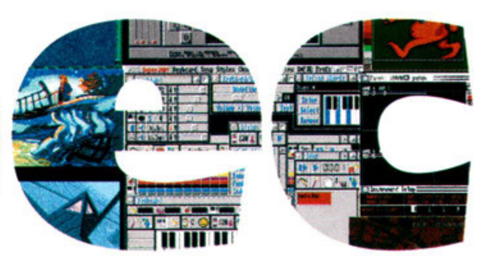
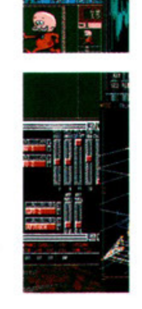
LUCASARTS GAMES
Originally *Loom*, *Monkey Island* and *Indiana Jones* were all due for release on CD, but only *Indy* is currently listed. If you imagine what *Monkey Island* would be like with a real audio soundtrack and proper lip-synching to accompany the on-screen dialogue, you have some idea of what wonders LucasArts could work with optical storage.



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Digita's® innovative *Human Interface Protocol*™ is incorporated setting a new standard in speed, style and elegance. "It *HIP*™ system is intuitive and a pleasure to use." – thank you Amiga Shopper, it's nice to be appreciated.

Graphics have always been the Amiga's strong point. Now it's better than ever. Pictures from Deluxe Paint can be placed in a document, and then sized, scaled and dragged (text automatically reformats around the image).

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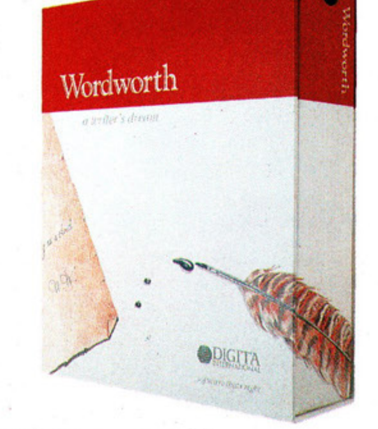
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Summing up, Amiga Shopper said: "Pounds-per-feature no other Amiga word processor comes close. Wordworth is what every owner of Kindwords would wish they had." Dreams become reality with Wordworth.



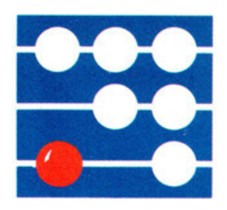
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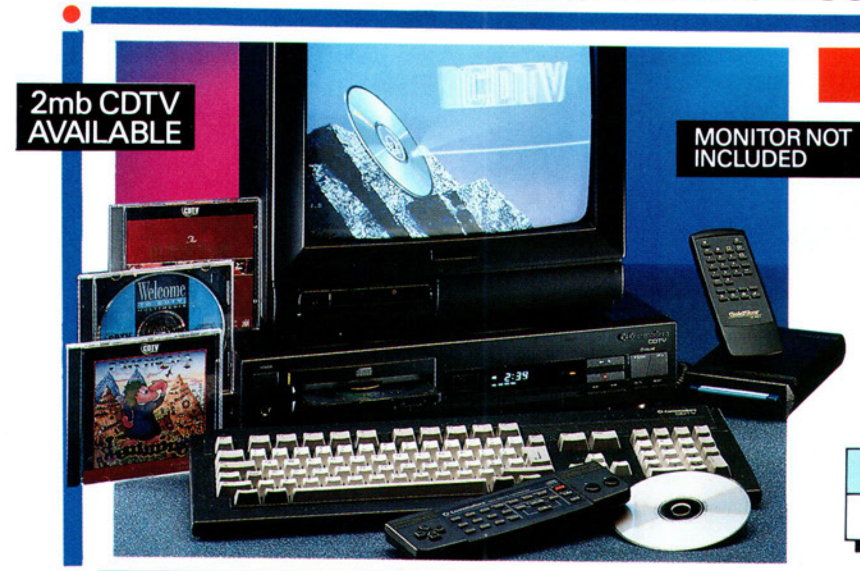
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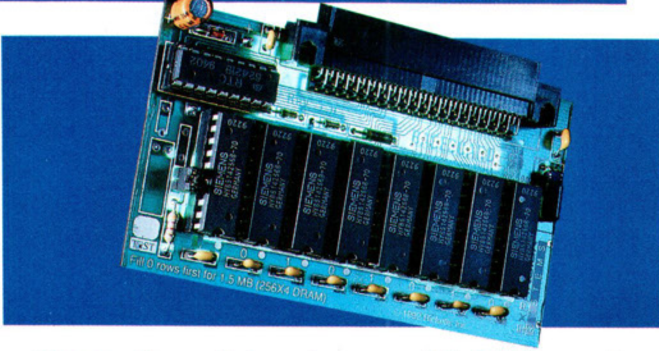
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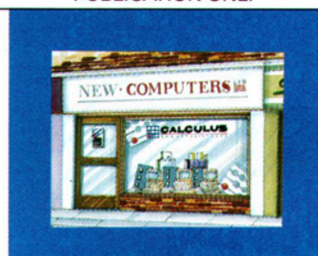
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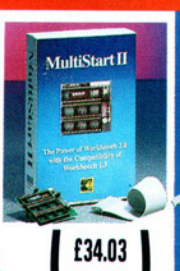
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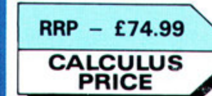


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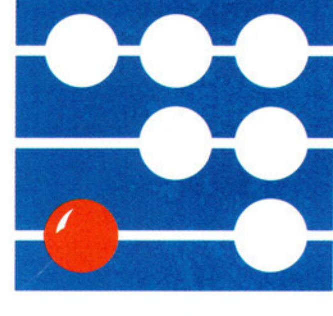
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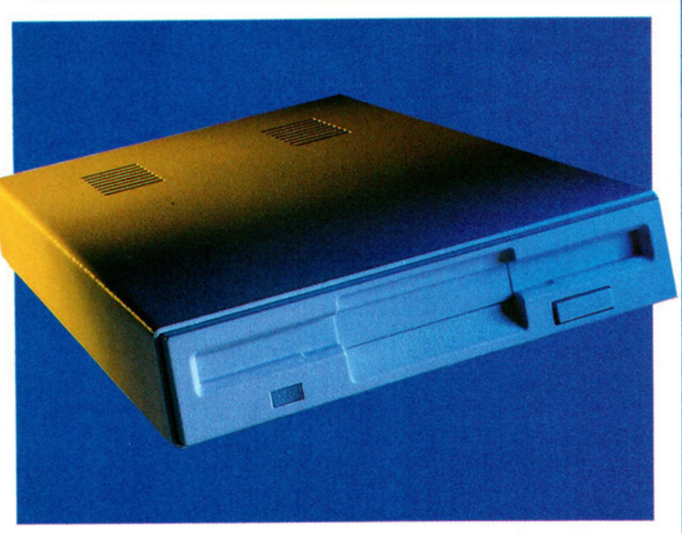


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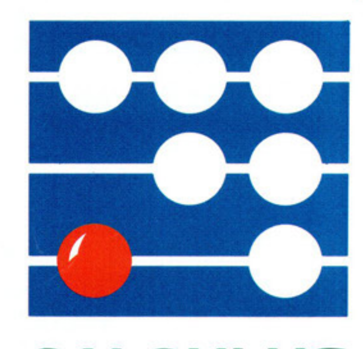
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Screenplay

Welcome to the latest informative, yet entertaining issue of Screenplay - the game-player's champion. We judge the recent releases, sentencing the bad 'uns to a life of obscurity, leaving the best to flourish and blossom on your Amiga.

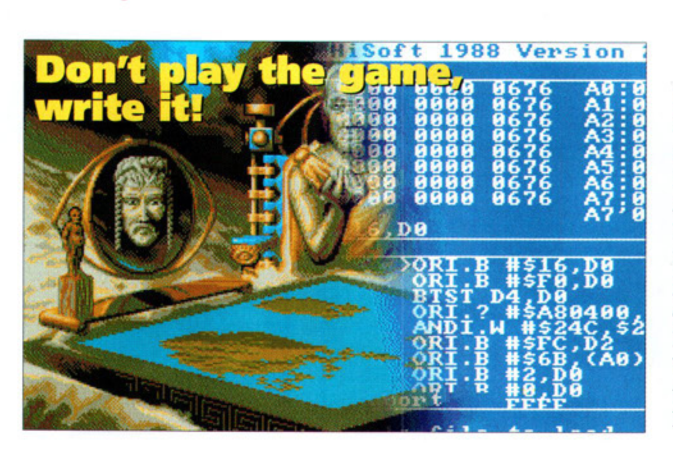
WHERE BIGGER MEANS BETTER

Everybody knows Amiga Format reviews are the best in the world, but why? **Neil Jackson**, Screenplay's Editor, lets the light in on the secrets...

"Boy, do we get some FLAK for trying to be individual! Every software house in the business tries to put pressure on us to cut corners, review half-finished games and generally skimp on the details you really need to know. But we are not having any of it – not ever, no never.

As you may have noticed in the News pages, we're the biggest Amiga magazine in the world – without exception – and we reckon it's partly due to the fact that we won't be brow-beaten or bullied into reviewing garbage favourably. We know you want the truth – so that's what we aim to give you.

All our reviewers, however crazy they may be, are solid 100% Amiga games-players themselves. We know only too well what it's like to get ripped off, and we want to stop that happening to you. So for the complete picture – one that's untainted by software house marketing ploys and back-scratching, there's only one place to turn to. *Amiga Format*, the toughest mag to please.



Listen to the words and get active! In this , the first part of a new series of games-programming tutorials created by Bullfrog programmer Scott Johnston and his froggy boss Peter Molyneux, we will be giving you the basics on creating your own great games. Using the programs supplied on this issue's coverdisk, you can learn, as you read, as you load. Who knows? Perhaps you could be tomorrow's top Amiga game-maker? Find out on... **Page 63**



Game-gods, good guys and gurus

Find out who are the best Amiga games programmers in the business. We take a close look at the most famous, creative and interesting game makers in Britain in an attempt to decide who are the top ten programming teams in the country. Find out how they got started, and why they can't stop. Find out the gossip and the scary stories which made them the best around. It's all here on... **Page 68**

THE REVIEWERS

What games are driving us completely bonkers this month? Well, when the team can actually spare a few minutes from creating your favourite Amiga-mungus magazine we indulge in a little of the following...

CLARE HODGSON
"When I can get my copy of *Pinball Dreams* back from Neil, that's what I'll play by choice. But where the heck's he hidden it?"

MARCUS DYSON
"I'm impressed by *Zool*, to a level that's almost embarrassing. I don't think I've seen a platform this good for ages. Watch out *Sonic!*"

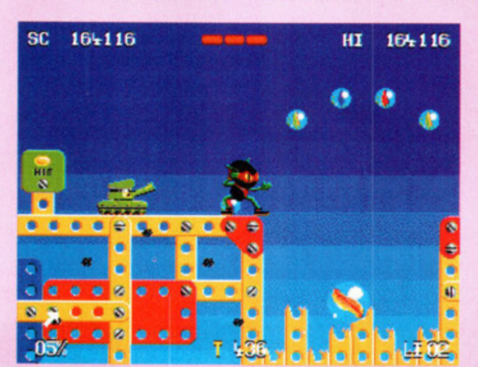
ANDY NUTTALL
"Had to happen really, I suppose. We've been having a *Kick Off 2* tournament in the office and I'm hooked all over again."

ASAM AHMAD
"I'm wrapped up in *Kick Off 2*, too. But's that's only because I can beat Nutts, Frank, Karl, well everyone nearly. Except Damien and Tim."

JAMES LEACH
"Look, you keep asking me what my fave Amiga game is and the answer is still the same. *Formula One Grand Prix*! Now please just leave me alone while I lap Mansell."

ED RICKETTS
"I can't answer that on the grounds that to do so would put me off my swing. Darn! Blown it. Can't you leave a man to play *Links* in peace?"

THE BEST OF THE REST – THIS MONTH'S TOP TITLES



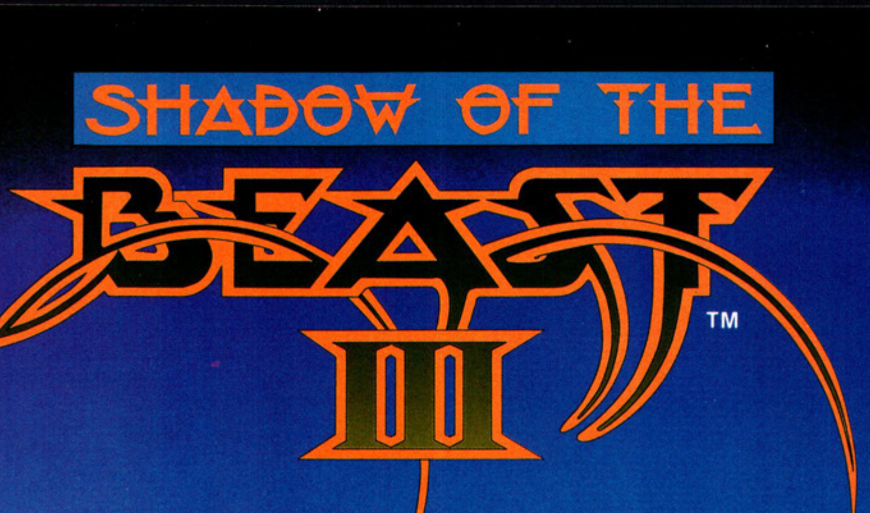


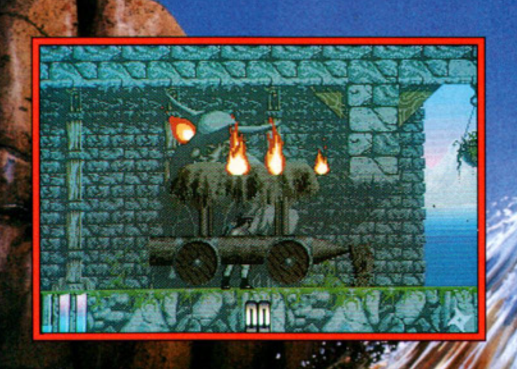
Zool
Gremlin reckon that it beats *Sonic the Hedgepig* and *The Mario Stereotypes* into a cocked hat full of abandoned console cartridges. Find out what we make of this bouncy ninja alien from the Nth dimension... Page 74

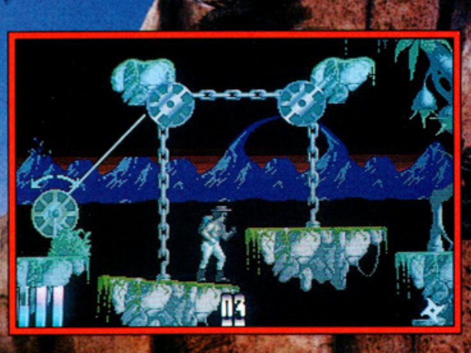
Premiere
Join us for the first complete showing of Core Design's new cinemattraction. Is it a flickery fleapit flop, or a multi-screen movie mogul? Will it be breaking box-office records, or go down in the Worst of Hollywood along with *Plan 9 From Outer Space*? Find out as we roll 'em on... Page 88

Sim Earth
What is the world coming to? Your Amiga, that's where, thanks to Maxis. We take a global view of their latest simulation, based on our beloved home planet. Is Earth doomed or is there a fighting chance of success and survival? And can the game stand up to the test of time too? Page 100

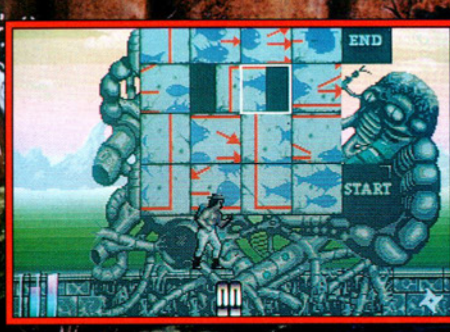
Fascination
French fun and frolics in graphic adventure form, but is it art? We reckon it's just bits and more bits (or something like that), but maybe that's just due to our British reserve. Find out what's got our stiff upper lips trembling on... Page 90

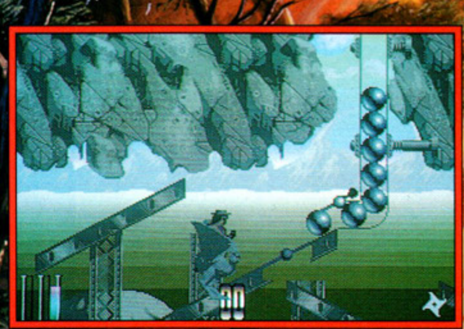

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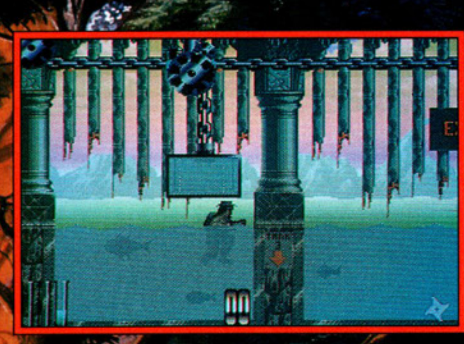


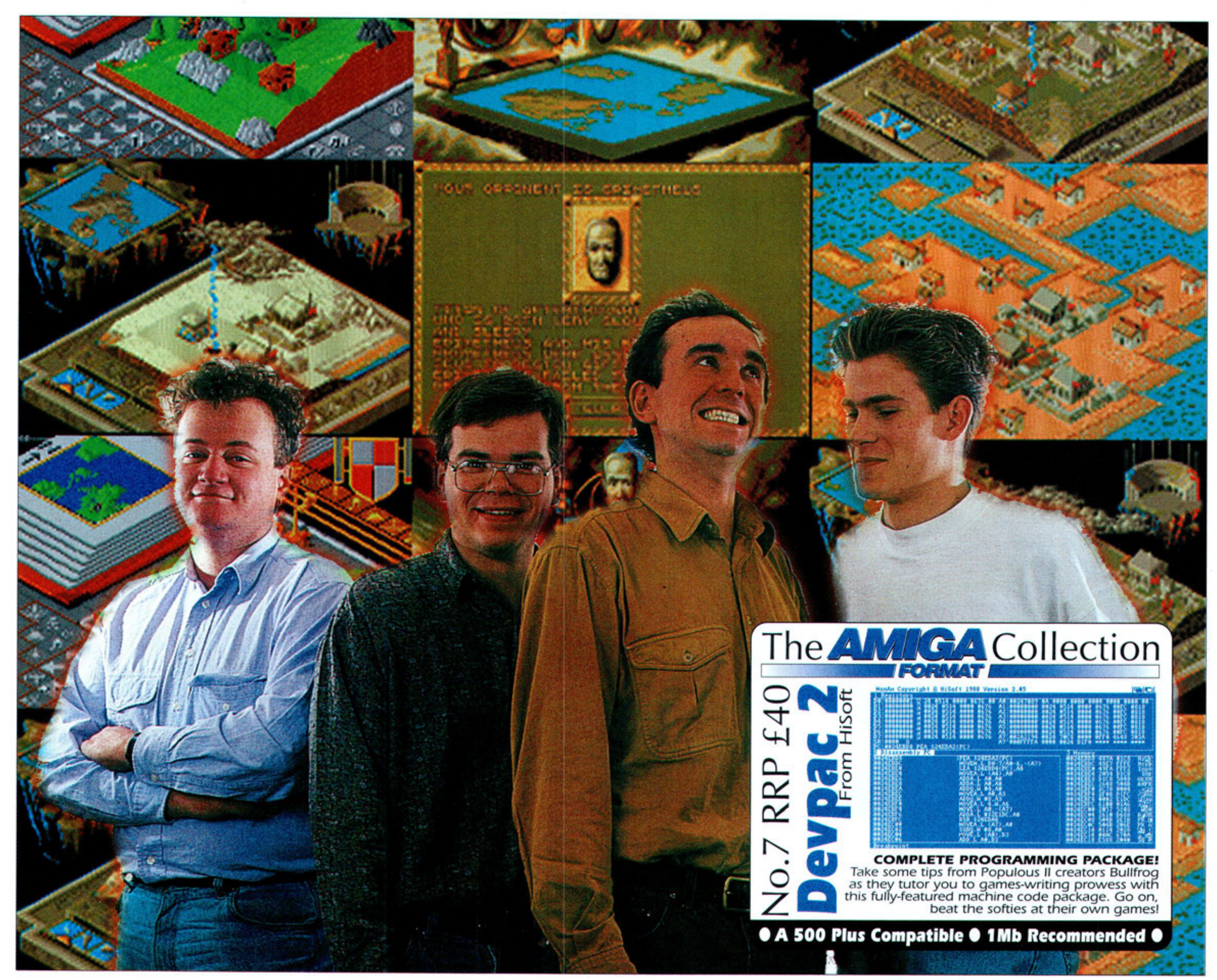





END
START







Above are four members of Bullfrog, the people behind this tutorial. Ever heard of *Populous* 1 and 2? These are the people responsible. Bullfrog don't go in for really complicated, in-depth programming techniques – they like to keep things simple.

Your turn!

How to program your own games in assembler

If you've ever wanted to become a games programmer, now's your chance. A complete assembly language on the coverdisk, plus a 'beginners' kit' of code and a complete tutorial from Bullfrog coder Scott Johnston. Don't think you can learn from a magazine article? Believe it – that's how Scott learnt!

What better way to learn to program than from experts like Bullfrog, the programming team behind the legendary *Populous* 2? And, what better person to learn from than a coder who now works on the Bullfrog team, and yet learnt how it's done from a magazine article?

Bullfrog leader Peter Molyneux explains: "A year or so, when *ST Format* (*Amiga Format*'s sister magazine for the Atari ST 16-bit computer) ran the series we wrote for them teaching people how to program, Scott had applied for a job as a trainee with us."

Bullfrog regularly takes on trainees and teaches them how to code, as well as taking youngsters on work-experience placements, which is why they have a well-established training system that forms the basis for this series. Anyway, back to Peter…

"We didn't have a job for Scottt to do at the time, so we couldn't take him on. Anyway, Scottt went away to college and taught himself how to program from the series in *ST Format*. A year later we were able to take him on, and by then he already knew how to code." Which only goes to show that you can do it too.

What we've got for you is the assembly language *DevPac 2*. Assembly language is used in nearly all professional Amiga games, because nothing else is quick enough. We've also got a code 'shell' provided by Bullfrog, which is exactly as used in *Populous* 2 and handles a lot of the tricky setting up of the

Continued overleaf

hardware, leaving you to get down to the nitty-gritty of creating a game.

During the course of the series, the code provided by Bullfrog will build up into a complete arcade game. It might not be the most stunning thing you've ever seen, but it will be all your own work!

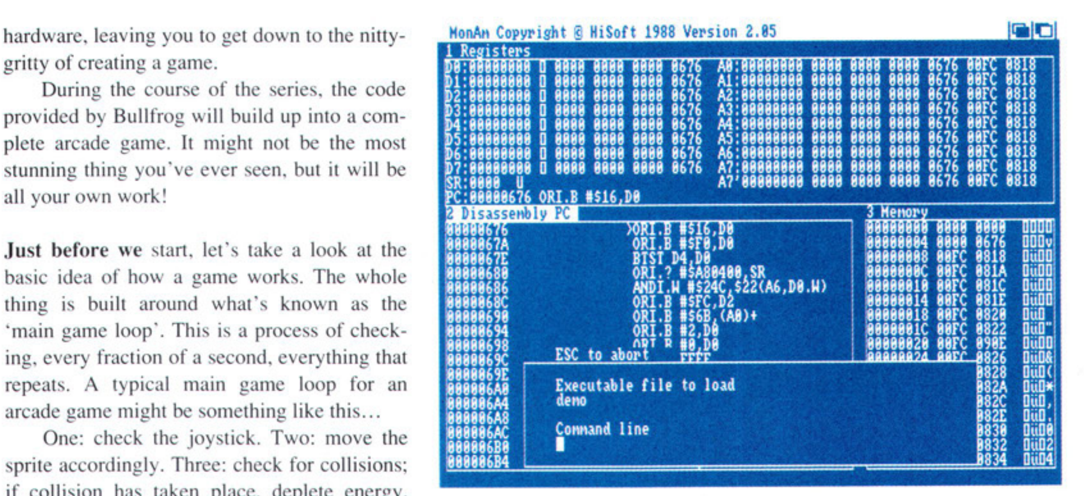
Just before we start, let's take a look at the basic idea of how a game works. The whole thing is built around what's known as the 'main game loop'. This is a process of checking, every fraction of a second, everything that repeats. A typical main game loop for an arcade game might be something like this…

One: check the joystick. Two: move the sprite accordingly. Three: check for collisions; if collision has taken place, deplete energy. Four: check game status counts; if energy is gone, it's game over. Then it goes back to the start of the loop.

This would give you a game in which a sprite moves around bumping into things and that eventually dies. Obviously, you then have to add in other things: if the fire button is pressed, start off a bullet animation; if enemies are moving around the screen, move them after the sprite; check if bullets have hit enemies, and if so get rid of them and add to the player's score; and so on. That's the basis.

Where we have to start off, of course, is getting a sprite on the screen and moving it around. Which is what we'll cover this month. But first, let's go over to Scott to introduce a few basics…

Any serious programmer will tell you that the beauty of programming in assembly language is the sheer speed you can achieve. It's easy making your Amiga produce quality animation, but when you want to turn an animation sequence into a game you need to start reading the position of the joystick, responding to the player's movements and keeping track of the enemies. To try to cram all these routines into a Basic program and still keep it running up to speed would be a nightmare.



This is MonAm2, the built-in Devpac monitor. You won't need to use it for this issue, but for the curious, it's a program for taking raw machine code and turning it back into assembler. It's also rather useful for finding errors.

Assembly language is so fast it's the ideal alternative. Currently the most popular assembly language programming tool is HiSoft's *Devpac*, although they have brought out the follow-up package, *Devpac 2*, which provides a comprehensive editor and assembler enabling you to create and edit your own programs. How you edit, assemble and then run a program is explained fully in the separate instructions box.

Assembly language programs correspond to your Amiga's machine language, so they are far more complex to write than Basic programs, but don't let that put you off.

This issue we begin a full tutorial on programming in assembly language and will keep it so simple, even the cat could use it. To start off, we're going to look at how you go about constructing an animation sequence.

Included on the disk is a simple 'shell' for writing programs in assembler, plus routines used to create *Populous* 2, including some of the sprite draws and all of the screen draws. It sets you up with all you need to swap screens, draw sprites, and so on.

With this shell you don't have to wade through loads of reference manuals to find out how to set up screens or display sprites: it's all been done for you. Over the course of several months we will be putting together a very simple game, but there are several things you will need so you can stick it through to the end:

- Enthusiasm. Yep, I know, it sounds obvious, but you will always be just a standard programmer unless you really want to do it well.

- It would be nice if you read a 68000 assembler book. (*Amiga Format* recommends Abacus's *Amiga Machine Language* – ISBN 1-55755-025-5 – available from Computer Manuals 021-706 6000).

- Do you know what binary and hexadecimal are? If not then try and find out. Get a reference manual out of the library.

Right, enthusiasm proven, we're ready to go on. As with any programming project whatever language you are using, the first stage is to design the sprites you need by using an art package. You don't need to do this yourself because we've included sprites on the disk, but here's how it's done, and next month we'll

HOW TO USE THE DISK

We've tried to make using *Devpac* as painless as possible. When you boot the disk, you'll find yourself in the text editor of the program. This is where you write your programs, although for this first part the vast majority of the programs have already been written for you.

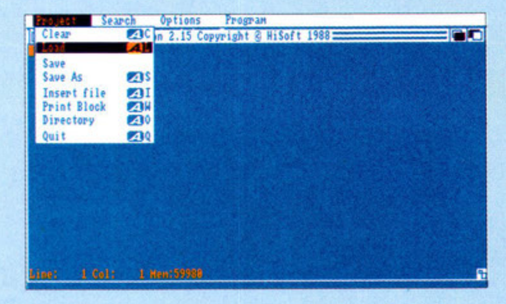
The most important thing to remember about machine code is that the code itself is all numbers. Computers only understand numbers, or object code as it's sometimes called. People, however, don't write programs using just numbers, but instead use a special language called assembly language. This can't be understood directly by the computer and is called source code.

An assembler like *Devpac* will take all the source (assembly) code and translate it directly into object (machine) code. There's lots more it can do too. For instance, there's a monitor for viewing your programs as they are working, but that is the bare bones of *Devpac*. Incidentally, if you accidentally get into the monitor, press Return a couple of times, and then Ctrl and C to return to the editor.

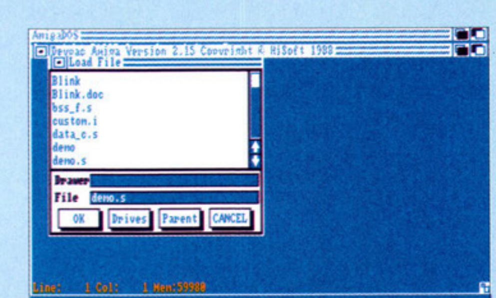
Finally, a couple of notes about special *Devpac* commands. If a line begins with a semi-colon (;) then *Devpac* will ignore it. Useful for hiding parts of a program you don't need.

When you see a command like "DC.B" or "DC.W" or "DC.L" that's just a data area for variables to be stored in.The command word "Even" is for making sure data areas are even in length (if not, the Amiga tends to crash).

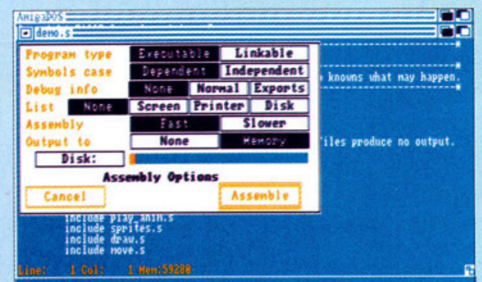
Anyway, here's how to load source code:



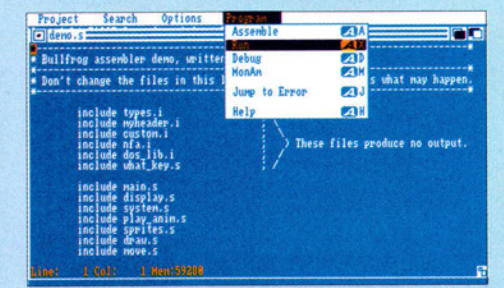
1 Move the mouse pointer to the top left of the screen and hold down the right mouse button. A menu will drop down. Select 'Load' from the Project menu, and a file requester will appear.



2 A handy tip for this file requester is to click on the slider on the right-hand side and move it up and down. The list of files will be automatically sorted alphabetically. Find and double click on the file called Demo.s. It will load and display.



3 To turn this into machine code, select 'Assemble' from the Program menu. A list of options will appear. Just click on Memory, and then on Assemble. *Devpac* will set the assembler going and ask you to press a key when it has finished.



4 To set the program going, just select the 'Run' option from the Program menu. The demo will run, displaying a sprite – type Q to quit.

provide a utility that will let you use your own sprites in the game we're creating.

There are several common art packages which are suitable, but Bullfrog tend to process their pre-drawn visuals with *Deluxe Paint III* or *IV*. In fact, most programmers who work on an Amiga use *DPaint*. But whatever art package you are using, the first step is to set up a grid of eight by eight pixels.

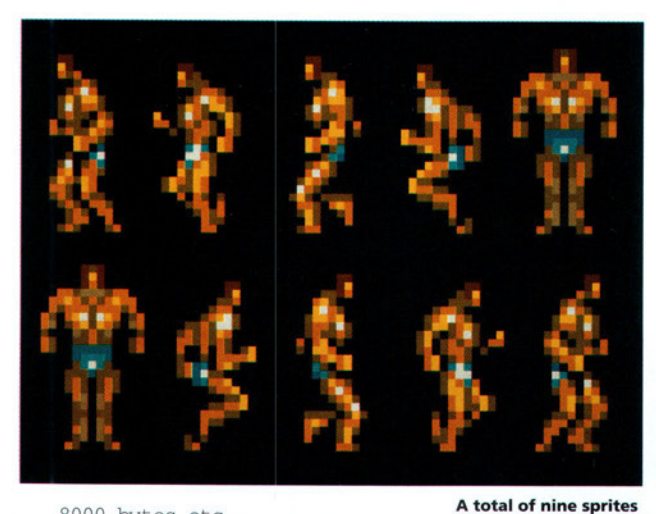
Make a checkerboard or grid in which to draw the sprites. "Personally, I prefer the checkerboard approach, but I've seen graphic artists fight about which is the best method," says Bullfrog boss Peter Molyneux. Now go ahead and design your sprites keeping them within the boundaries of your grid.

Once your sprites for the frames of animation are drawn, you must place them in order starting at the top-left point of the screen and working your way along. Once you reach the right-hand side of the screen, move down a line and continue.

It's vital at this point to understand the Amiga's screen format. Each pixel in a low-resolution screen is stored as four bits in four different four-bit groups called words. These are known as bit planes, and because there are four you have 16 possible combinations (1 bit times four planes, or four to the power of two) for each pixel – hence a palette of 16 colours.

The four different words are stored at different points of memory, with all the words of the first plane (Plane 0) stored in memory together, followed by plane 1 and so on. The memory looks something like this:

```
Start of Plane 0
8000 bytes
Start of Plane 1
8000 bytes etc..
```



A total of nine sprites are used for the man sprite in the demo. They probably look distorted and unreal to most people at this scale, but they look just fine on screen.

The most efficient method of storing a sprite in memory, so you can access it for quick drawing, is to store each line of the sprite as four words for the first 16 pixels of the line, four words for the next 16 pixels and so on. This is why almost all sprite routines cater only for sprites which are a multiple of sixteen pixels wide – 16, 32, 48, 64 and so on.

As we have said, included on next month's disk will be a convert program which will accept IFF files from art packages like *DPaint*. It will then convert your graphics into data usable by the program. Just for this month, stick with our graphics.

OK, that's the boring introduction done, let's have a look at the disk. If you first assemble Demo.s and then run Demo (instructions on assembling and running are in the separate box), all that should happen is that we display a sprite on the screen. To exit from the program press the Q Key. Great. There you go. What? You want more?

We will never be changing demo.s – well, at least not very often. Whenever you want to assemble this program, first save out the file you were using and then load in Demo.s. When assembling this, switch the OUTPUT TO MEMORY and then you can test the program just by using the RUN command. This way, you won't be saving the changed demo on to the disk over the old one.

Now let's try and move the sprite. Have a look in draw.s in the routine:

```
_draw_all
```

and you will see we have got the following bit of code:

```
move.w  #0,d0
move.w  #0,d1
move.w  #0,d2
```

Now, if we change these to…

```
move.w man_x,d0
move.w man_y,d1
move.w man_frame,d2
```

Right, now the impatient ones of you will have assembled that. No change is visible, of course not, but if you go into move.s and remove the indicated ;'s our sprite should start to move to the right and return to the start when he reaches the end of the screen.

The way these instructions work is as fol-

Continued overleaf

THE HEART OF THE MACHINE: THE MC68000 CENTRAL PROCESSOR

The chip that actually makes the decisions and runs programs in most Amigas is the Motorola Corporation 68000. Some Amigas have more powerful versions of this – big brothers, if you like – but the differences are fairly minor, save that bigger machines go faster.

If you're unsure of how computer memory works, all I can do is advise you to read and digest Answerfile, both on p221 of this issue and on p199 of last month's *Amiga Format*. That will give you a lot of insights into the way that the Amiga handles information.

The way the 68000 works is not too tricky to grasp. Inside the chip are stores for numbers, a bit like memory, save that they can be manipulated directly by the chip. They're called registers and can be added, multiplied and tested for. If a number gets to big or small, a jump can be made to a different part of a program – this is how the 68000 makes decisions.

There are different types of registers. The ones that point to areas in the Amiga's memory are called address registers. There are eight of them and their names are fairly dull: A0, A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 and A7. Using the Bullfrog's routines on the Collection Coverdisk, you will rarely need to use the address registers.

Far more important for our purposes are the data registers. These are used to store numbers to be manipulated. They're called D0, D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6 and D7. There are other data registers, but leave them alone for the minute. In this issue, you'll only need to bother with the first three – these are used to store the X coordinate (D0), the Y coordinate (D1) and the frame number of the sprite (D2).

There are other registers, but the most important of these are the PC (Program Counter) and Status registers (usually called the SR). The PC keeps the address of where the program is currently up to in memory – when you jump to a different address, all that happens is the PC is given a new place to start.

The Status register holds many flags, which keep track of things like whether or not the last instruction resulted in zero, or a negative number, and similar conditions.

So in this example, when the animation frame number is compared to 4 and is less than or equal to that number, the program continues. When it is greater than that, the frame counter is set back to zero. There are other frames of animation, but if you use them then your man will turn towards you while walking.

There are other registers for doing different tasks inside the MC68000, but you don't need to know about them yet. What is more important is that you appreciate the above – that's all you need to understand to use this tutorial.

For the curious, I'll tell you about some of the other bits of machine code – the parts that Bullfrog have steered you around by including lots of routines to do the dirty work for you.

There is a block of memory which is reserved for use by the custom chips of the Amiga. These are accessed just like normal memory, but you can't use them for storing information. They come in three basic types; read-only registers, which the 68000 can look at but not talk to; write-only registers, which the 68000 can talk to but not read; and read/write registers, which it can read and talk to.

These hardware registers are the gateway between the 68000 and the Amiga. For instance, if you set one of the binary switches in a certain register, the display will change from low resolution to high resolution.

It's not all that simple, not by a long shot. For instance, to make the Paula chip play a sound sample, you have to tell it where the sample is in memory, how fast to play and which channels to use. Bear in mind that you have to do this using hexadecimal numbers and you see that talking to the hardware directly can be a nightmare.

If you want to see just how involved it is, use the Devpac editor to load in the other files that are listed in demo.s. Some of them are fairly large. The amount of programming you have to do for even the smallest tasks – like opening a custom screen, reading the joystick and putting up a sprite – is quite enormous.

However, for those interested, the Bullfrog's routines will prove very useful. Many people are stumped with programming because they don't have enough examples to work from.

The trouble is that up to now there hasn't been much available in the sense of professional machine code for you to look at and learn from. Try to learn as much as you can from reading the source – most of it has documentation.

lows. First we increment (increase) the value of the man's x co-ordinate by 1 every turn. The value is then compared with 304 (the edge of the screen) and if it is greater than this the position is reset to 0. Otherwise we jump over the reset command. The value is then stored back into man_x ready for the next draw.

You can change the value in the add command to increase the speed of movement.

Taking a moment to explain a couple of things: d0 is a register, which is basically just an area of RAM in which you store a value. A variable is a number that changes, basically, so you can add to a variable to affect what your program is doing. Hope that's simple enough to be going on with. Anyway, the way all these things work will become clear as you practice.

A small challenge for you: see if you can write the code to move the man down the screen. The code will be basically the same as the 'move x' stuff, but remember the screen size is 320 by 200 pixels, and that the label 'lessthanx' has already been used, so use something different.

A note on labels: try and keep them meaningful or you will forget what they are doing later on. Having six labels with the name '.here' is not very helpful.

We should, by now, have got the man moving down and across the screen. But this points out a problem: he's moving as if he is floating. The man isn't actually doing any walking. Let's put a bit of animation into the man.

To do this we take the same routine as was used in the movement, but change a few things. If you're still unsure of moving the man down the screen, the next bit of code should sort you out – it will animate the sprite, and should be added into Move.s, before the final RTS command.

```
move.w man_frame,d2
add.w #1,d2
cmp.w #4,d2
ble.s  .lessthana
move.w #0,d2
.lessthana
move.w d2,man_frame
```

Be careful, we only have four frames of animation to play with, so don't set the compare too high.

Compile this and have a look. He is changing frames just a little bit fast – too fast, in fact – so we need to slow him down. To do this change the line

```
cmp #4,d2
```

to

```
cmp #4*4,d2
```

Also, scale the number down. After the line

```
move.w man_frame,d2
```

in draw.s, place the following piece of code:

```
asr.w  #2,d2
```

Assemble this, and the man should be walking a bit slower.

So, in just one month we've got an animated sprite moving around the screen and learnt some of the most important commands. Next month, we'll need to put our man under joystick control. See you then.

COMMAND OVERVIEW

```
move.w #1,d0
```

The move command is one of the most heavily used commands. For simplicity we are using move.w – the w means word-sized data only. It is the equivalent of the basic LET statement. It loads x (a number) into d0.

```
add.w #1,d0
```

The add command does just that: it adds the value of 1 to d0.

```
sub.w #1,d0
```

The sub command is similar to the add but subtracts instead.

```
cmp.w #1,d0
```

The compare command compares the value of 1 with the value in d0. When used in conjunction with a branch it's similar to the IF statement you'd find in the Basic language.

Branches

The branch checks on the flags set by the compare statement. There are 15 different versions of this command:

```
bra   Branch always. Same as GOTO
bcc   Branch if carry clear
bcs   Branch if carry set
beq   Branch if equal
bge   Branch if greater than or equal to
bgt   Branch if greater than
bhi   Branch if higher
ble   Branch if less than or equal to
bls   Branch if low or same
blt   Branch if less than
bmi   Branch if negative
bne   Branch if not equal to
bpl   Branch if positive
bvc   Branch if overflow clear
bvs   Branch if overflow set
```

Don't worry if you don't understand what all of these do. By using them you'll soon get the hang of their particular functions. Anyway, when the condition is true the branch is taken. If not then we move on to the next instruction.

Labels

You will notice that some of the labels have a '.' in front of them: these are called local labels. That means that you can use words like .finished more than once, though not inside the same routine. Routines are defined by labels which have not got a period '.' in front of them and are finished with an RTS command.

```
jsr
```

Jump to subroutine. This command is basically the same as the GOSUB command.

```
rts
```

This is basically the same as the RETURN command.

```
asr.w #1,d0
```

The asr command means Arithmetic Shift Right and works by moving a binary number to the right a definite number of times.

For example, on a

```
asr.w #1,10
```

we get an answer of 5. This is because 10 in binary looks like this:

```
1010  =  10
```

and when we move it to the right by one it becomes:

```
0101  =  5
```

There are many more commands for shifting, rotating, and slicing, but there isn't really room to fit them in here.

If you want the best, most authoritative and comprehensive guide to the 68000, try to get a copy of Sybex's *Programming the 68000* (£23.95 from Computer Manuals 021-706 6000). It's very handy for looking up particular commands.

OOOPS!

If you quit out of *Devpac*, you'll get to some readme files on the disk. Unfortunately, looking at them can't be done on Workbench 2 machines. Worse, it causes other Amigas to crash! The reason is that, because of an oversight, the wrong version of the text displaying program (ppmore) has been included.

Putting the right version on to the disk (copied from the *Pinball/Caesar* Coverdisk) is fairly easy. Boot up with Workbench, double click on the Shell and type:

```
Copy from Coverdisk39b:c/ppmore to Devpac2:c
```

After a disk swap or two, the right program will be copied over and you can view the documents – they're not at all necessary when using *Devpac*, but we thought we'd tell you about it just to be on the safe side.

UPGRADING TO THE LATEST *DEVPAC* – AND NEWS OF A GREAT PROGRAMMING COMPO!

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***DevPac* 3 is probably the only ever Format Gold award-winning programming language. To coincide with this article, HiSoft are arranging a special upgrade offer at a great price: contact them on 0525 718181 for details.**

And while we're about it, here's news of a great competition we'll be running in a few issues' time. Next issue, DMI Games will be supplying their *PP Hammer* sprites and we'll show you how to load them into your programs. In three months' time, DMI will be offering some amazing prizes to the best program created using *PP Hammer*. And, what's more, if it's good enough that program will be published! But that's just a taste of what we've got for the future: see you next month for more programming!



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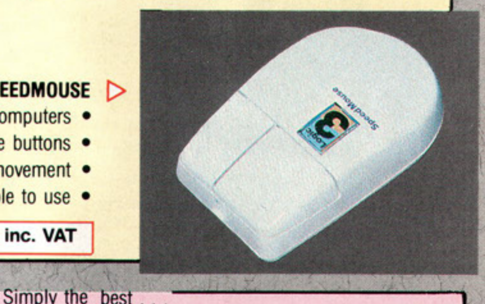
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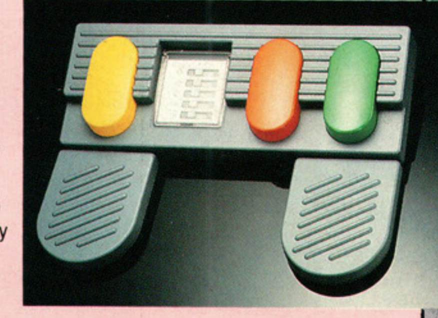




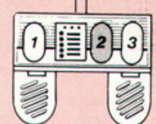
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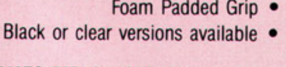
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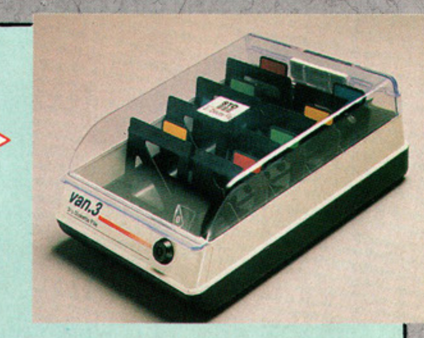
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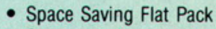
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Games programmers are two-a-penny these days, and sometimes considered cowboys. However! **Asam Ahmad** finds out what some of the better Amiga coders are all about. Interested? Read on…

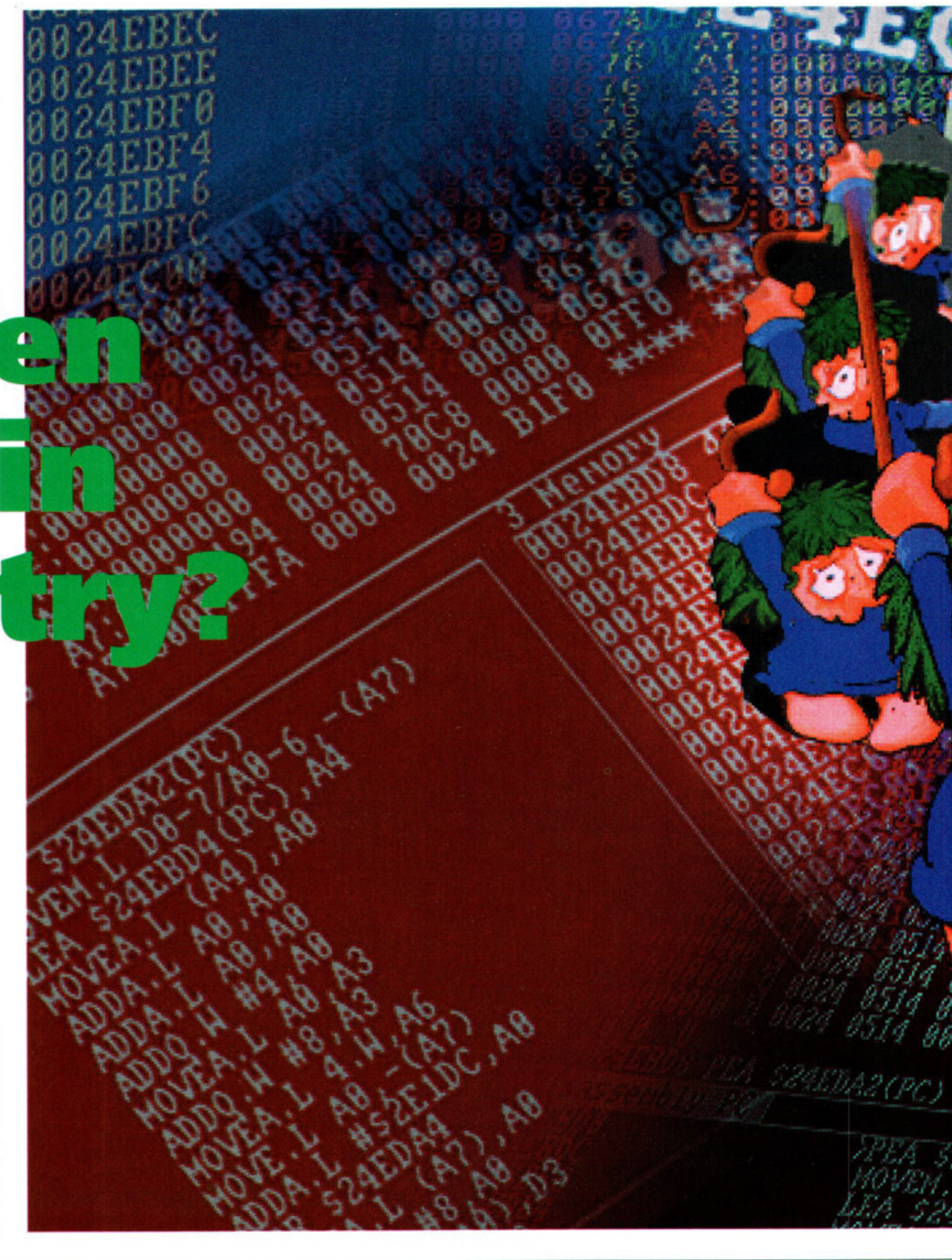
The Top Ten coders in the country?

Games programmers eh? Who needs 'em? I guess without them there would be a part of our lives left unfulfilled. That part that likes to leave reality for a bit and pretend to be somebody else, or just to have a bit of mindless fun.

But who are these people? They have a reputation as troglodytes who live permanently in a dark room, or rich Ferrari-driving dudes with an attitude and a bank balance to match. Neither and both are true.

So, here you are, planning to read the programming article which follows and become one of these rare creatures, a top programmer with a stack of hit games under his belt. But who really are the top names in programming? Let's find out…

Editor's note: the opinions in this article are purely those of Asam, not of the magazine. As such, take them with a pinch…



This is the modern world, and today it's not writing a hit record that's important but writing a hit game. And the following pages are about the guys who have made it in the games world.

DISKOGRAPHIES

All the programmers here have written the odd game or so, but you might ask what makes them 'top' programmers. The games listed here are complete diskographies of each of the programmers and for those old enough to remember, at least one of the games by each has been either original or technically groundbreaking in some area or another. All the games that are available on the Amiga have been marked, as for the rest, well…

ARCHER MACLEAN
Star Raiders
International Karate
International Karate +
Jimmy White's Snooker — Amiga
and currently
Archer Maclean's Pool — Amiga

PETER MOLYNEUX
Populous — Amiga
Powermonger — Amiga
Populous II — Amiga
and currently
Codename 'PIP' — Amiga

RAFFAELE CECCO
Equinox
Cop-Out
Exolon
Solomon's Key
Cybernoid
Cybernoid II
Licence To Kill
Stormlord
Deliverence
Time Machine
First Samurai — Amiga

SHAUN SOUTHERN
Trailblazer
Kickstart
Kickstart 2
Cosmic Causeway
Super Scramble
Talisman
Lotus — Amiga
Super Cars — Amiga
Lotus II — Amiga
Super Cars II — Amiga
and currently
Lotus III — Amiga

GEOFF CRAMMOND
Super Invaders
Aviator
Revs
Sentinel — Amiga
Stunt Car Racer — Amiga
Formula 1 Grand Prix — Amiga

DAVID BRABEN
Elite
Lander
Zarch
Virus — Amiga
and currently
Elite 2 — Amiga

RIK YAPP
Macbeth
RS Titanic
Sailing
Trivial Pursuit
Yes Prime Minister — Amiga
Hunt For Red October — Amiga
Better Dead Than Alien — Amiga
Sleeping Gods Lie — Amiga
Time — Amiga
Team Yankee — Amiga
Deathbringer — Amiga
Volfied — Amiga
Pacific Islands — Amiga

TONY CROWTHER
Bug Blaster
Blagger
Loco
Kettle
Trap
Potty Pidgeon
Monty Mole
Black Thunder/Suicide Express



Griffin
William Wobler
Zig Zag
Fernandez Must Die ____ Amiga
Bombuzal ____ Amiga
Phobia ____ Amiga
Captive ____ Amiga
Captain Planet ____ Amiga
Knightmare ____ Amiga
and currently
Captive 2 ____ Amiga

JON HARE
Sodov The Sorcerer
Twister
Parallax
Gallaxibirds
Wizball
Oh No!
Shoot Em Up Construction Kit ____ Amiga
Insects in Space
MicroProse Soccer ____ Amiga
3D Tennis ____ Amiga
Megalomania ____ Amiga
Sensible Soccer ____ Amiga
WizKid ____ Amiga
and currently
Cannon Fodder ____ Amiga
Megalomania 2 ____ Amiga

MIKE MONTGOMERY
STEVE KELLY
OF THE BITMAPS
ZX 81 Super Glooper
ZX 81 Frogger
ZX 81 Tempest
Chequered Flag
Scrabble
Backgammon
Matchpoint
Cluedo
Monopoly
Scalextric ____ Amiga
Amiga Karate ____ Amiga
QL Chess
QL Karate
QL Draw
ST Karate
Xenon ____ Amiga
Speedball ____ Amiga
Cadaver ____ Amiga
Cadaver The Payoff ____ Amiga

Archer Maclean



Jimmy White's Snooker has won an abundance of awards, from Best Sports Simulation to Best Programmer award (Archer Maclean, not Jimmy White!) Here you can see some off Archer's cheeky balls making silly faces and trying to put you of your game. Cheeky beggars!

After obtaining a degree in cybernetics, Archer Maclean decided that he didn't actually want to do anything in this field at all and hence turned to computer programming. He's always had an interest in computers and their operations, ever since the age of 13. Having programmed for many processors including the Z80, 6502, and loads that I've never heard of, he turned his hand to the 68000. Quite understandably, he hates the 8086 family that those dreadful PC things use.

Archer once had a bet with a friend about who would write a number one game first and who would own a Ferrari (red) first. Archer won. Indeed all of Archer's games have been number one on some computer format, and *Snooker* actually won several accolades including Best Sports Game 1992. Now he has a passion for fast cars.

He has a few novel ideas in his pipeline(?), but won't tell me about them. Secret? Thanks Archer. In the future he'd like to see a super machine with one standard model that has good custom chips that don't hold up the processor. Something you could call a real computer.

Archer's current project is a pool simulation, that plays like the excellent *Snooker*. Archer can often be found playing with his new ball game and it will soon be appearing on an Amiga near you. It's going to be called '*Archer Maclean's Pool*', and is not bad at all...

Peter Molyneux





'God' games, for want of a better word, have really became very popular, especially when it comes to games like *Populous*, *Powermonger* and *Populous II*. And the man to blame for that little lot is Peter Molyneux. It 's all his fault. I think the man deserves a medal. Or maybe not.

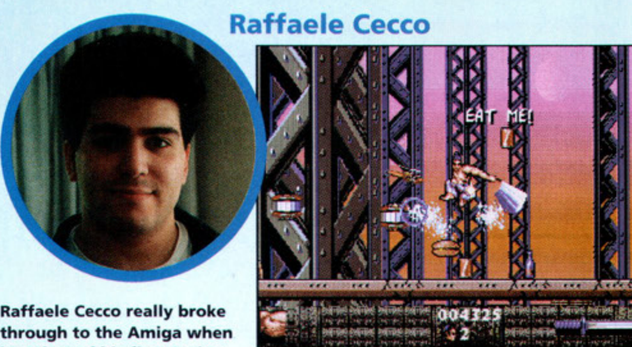
According to Peter, he got into computing because he was (is?) completely dyslexic and working on computers was about the only thing that he could do. And do he certainly can, with some excellent releases like *Populous*. Peter has always been a child at heart and loves playing games. Now he loves designing them even more. He attributes this to the fact that his Mum used to own a toy shop and he often got given the shop-soiled games with bits missing, so he had to make up his own rules...

Over the last few years, he's been messing around on *Populous II*, which actually got released last December, and more recently he's just finished the *Challenge* games for *Poppy II*. For the last three months he's been helping on *Syndicate* which he says looks 'fab', but then he would say that wouldn't he. Now he's been programming his latest project, code named 'PIP', which should — hopefully — be released in about a year. He thinks it will be 'truly awesome', and going by past records, he might just be right...

Peter would like to program for a computer with a 5,000 by 5,000 pixel screen with 16 trillion colours called the 'Stonker 1000'. Right. Whatever you say Peter!

Check out the article that Peter and the Bullfrog guys have written on Pages 63-66, all about how to go about programming your own games.

Raffaele Cecco



Raffaele Cecco really broke through to the Amiga when he released his first Amiga game, *First Samurai*. At the moment he's working on *Second Samurai* which looks good, at least graphically. Oh, and Raf's also got a diploma in lunacy or something along those lines, which must be significant.

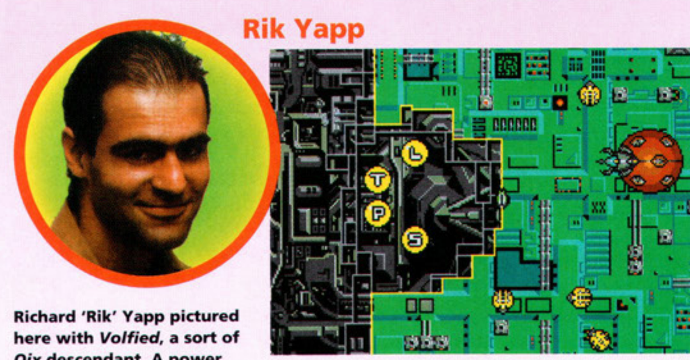
Raf, as I will refer to him due to the fact that I'll probably spell his name wrong if I type it too often, started programming when he decided that A-levels were totally useless, and he wanted to earn £60,000 a year and have a Porsche as a company car. Instead he ended up with £4,000 and a London Underground tube ticket! BUT! Despite his lowly disposition, he rose and rose to his present position as perhaps one of the best programmers around. Probably.

After the success of *First Samurai*, he's now working on (by popular demand?) the cunningly named *Second Samurai*. Apparently he's rewriting it from scratch becasue he thinks his original code was dreadful! It's meant to be released at Christmastime. Deadlines? Nobody needs 'em.

Raf's dream machine would have hardware flipping, rotation and scaling with 24-bit colour, loadsa megs of RAM, a decent 12 note polyphonic sound system and a fast 68000 derivative. At the moment he's happy (?) with the Amiga, but would like to program for the Super Nintendo console.

Once *Second Samurai* has been finished, he'd like to try his hand at being an astronaut or a trapeze artist (have you seen a shrink, dear boy?) but he fears he's probably too overweight for these professions so he'll probably stick to programming games.

Rik Yapp



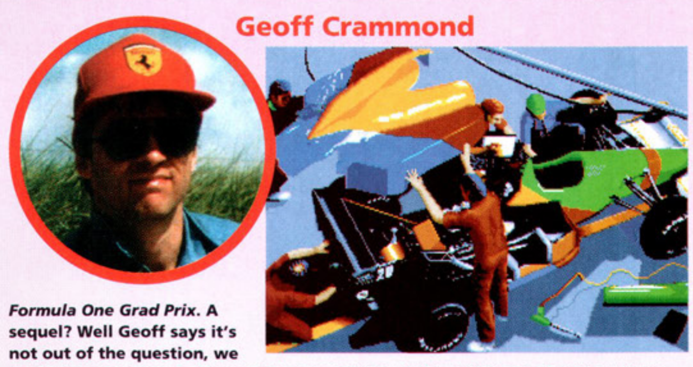
Richard 'Rik' Yapp pictured here with *Volfied*, a sort of *Qix* descendant. A power game with a difference. Rik and Oxford Digital Enterprises are currently working on an interesting project that combines the elements of action and adventures, using a flight-simulation style approach.

Rik sees himself more as a part of a team than a lone super-programmer, and along with partners Richard 'Champie' Horrocks and John 'Elv' Wood, makes up Oxford Digital Enterprises, the group behind *Team Yankee*. Recently ODE have been working on *Cyberspace*, a 3D real-time role-playing game. "This combines the technology of flight-sims with the depth of adventures to produce a new experience in gaming," he told me. Interesting concept.

He started life (as a programmer) in 1979 on the Amiga's ancestor the PET, using the only language I can program in, BASIC. Most 'programmers' hate BASIC, but Rik loves it. He also loves C, mainly due to it being highly portable across formats.

Rik reckons that he'd like to program for a machine that had sold millions of units rather than going for anything pretentiously high-specced, and hates the secrecy that surrounds the hardware and software that mega machines suffer from. Rik thinks the plummeting cost of hard-drives and CD-ROM systems will mean that design groups will have to be bigger and there will be a new breed of Stephen Spielberg-style directors needing to oversee game 'technicians' as games get larger and more and more complex. Rik said I must mention Wall, Ade and Colin, but unfortunately there's no room.

Geoff Crammond



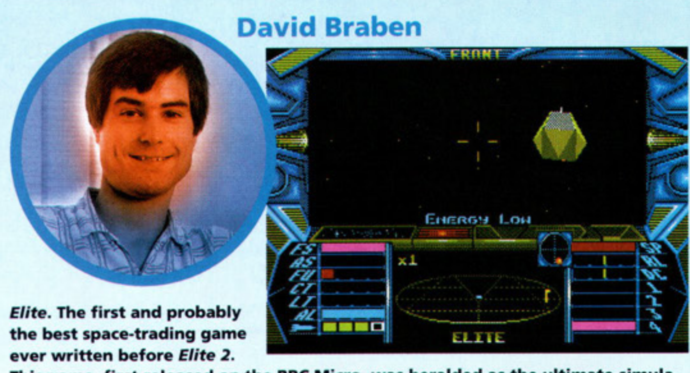
Formula One Grad Prix. A sequel? Well Geoff says it's not out of the question, we could have an even sexier racing game on the Amiga with more features than you ever thought necessary until you tried living without them. I reckon that Geoff should now write a bicycle simulator, where you have to waggle to pedal.

Geoff Crammond left university with a degree in physics. He decided after eight years of doing strenuous 'physical' things that he was a bit tired and turned to the relatively easy task of programming games. At this point he had already programmed *Super Invaders* and *Aviator* for the BBC, and having left the realms of the physical world he started *Revs*, the completely astonishing 3D driving game on the BBC micro that set a standard.

At the moment he is working out of house as a freelance programmer, currently signed to MicroProse, working on the sequel to the superb racing game *Formula One Grand Prix*. Geoff likes "programming on the 68000, but I also like the power that PC systems can provide, but I'm not very keen to program on the 8086 family processors. My ideal machine would probably be a great big computer that everyone could afford and hence have a very high circulation." It's quite a reasonable request, really, but somebody actually has to produce this thing, don't they? Any takers?

Recently he went driving around the Silverstone grand prix circuit in a Formula Ford car. You'd think he'd be fed up of fast cars by now, and after having worked solidly for two-and-a-half years on *Formula One Grand Prix* and now the sequel, all Geoff wants to do is have a rest on holiday in America and just forget about it all for a while. What I want to know is what happened to *Sentinel 2*, eh?

David Braben



Elite. The first and probably the best space-trading game ever written before *Elite 2*. This game, first released on the BBC Micro, was heralded as the ultimate simulation (although you can't do this in real life yet!). All the subsequent games in th genre were dubbed *'Elite clones'*. What more of an accolade could you want?

David went to Cambridge where he did a degree in physics, and actually wrote *Elite* while still at university with Ian Bell. Physics is his profession, which is probaly why David concentrates heavily on mathematical games that involve lots of complex physics. Currently he is working on *Elite*'s sequel which he hopes will be ready for release by the end of the year. *Frontier* (as it is called) promises some groundbreaking programming, especially in the graphics department, with some fast, fully-filled coloured polygon routines for as much realism as possible.

After *Elite*, David worked on *Lander*, which was later named *Zarch*, for Acorn on their Archimedes machine. The Amiga incarnation made an appearance not too mach later as *Virus*. David loves "programming on the Archimedes, but I find the Amiga a respectable machine to code on. I hate PC systems, I don't mind that Atari thing, but I do prefers the Amiga."

David's ideal machine would be at least 68040 based, with a hardware polygonal display, rather than the conventional bitmap displays that all computers, apart from the NeXT machines, have. It would also have at least 8-bits per colour gun, with all colours (that's 16,777,216) displayable on-screen simultaneously. Oh and a hard drive all for under £500.

David wouldn't comment on anything else for fear of me twisting his words into tabloid scandal. As if.

Tony Crowther

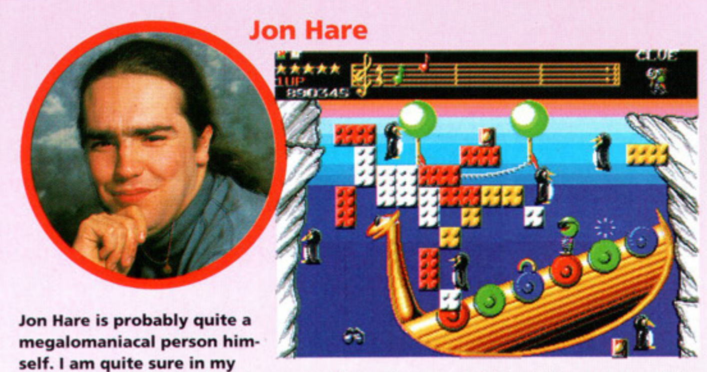
Knightmare! We've got the good, the bad, the ugly and the rest on the Amiga all at once! Tony Crowther created one of the best adventure-style role-playing games around with *Knightmare*, based on the television series of the same name with some bearded bloke. Shame the TV show was a bit poor though.

Tony started programming right back in his schooldays, where he wrote educational software which he subsequently sold to his mentors. He taught himself more or less all of what he knows (as far as computers go anyway), and even jacked in his Computer Studies A-level because he was so far ahead of his teacher. He actually wanted to be an architect when he was at school, but he thought computers looked a lot more fun so he continued programming.

His latest project in the pipeline is *Captive 2 – Freedom Fighters*, and it's meant to be "very impressive. And it will absolutely knock your socks off." Though not if you imagine you're cool and don't wear socks. *Freedom Fighters* is apparently going to be runnable from Workbench, and you will be able to iconise it, so you can pop it up at any time to have a quick play. A nice little break from writing articles! He's also written his own art package that he produced purely for the fact that *Deluxe Paint* simply wasn't able to do what he wanted to do. He might release his art package, but only to the right taker...

Tony's ambitions are to earn loadsamoney, and to be recognised for his work. Fame and fortune eh, everyone's dream. In a year's time, Tony sees himself working on *Captive 3*, then *Captive 4, 5, 6*... cheers Tony, and here's a little more fame for you. Sorry no fortune.

Jon Hare



Jon Hare is probably quite a megalomaniacal person himself. I am quite sure in my mind that he is trying to gain recognition and power to the point where he can overthrow that John Major character and rule the country himself by releasing some amazingly playable games. Here's a piccy of *WizKid*.

When Jon originally started in the computer industry, he actually lied to get his first job for LT Software. Soon after this, Jon and Chris Yates formed a partnership that produced some of the best games released on the Commodore 64 at the time. By means of a government enterprise scheme, Sensible Software was set up, under which name they have been going for about five years now.

At the moment, work is in progress on *Cannon Fodder*, a war strategy kind of game with an arcadey action orientated feel. The game has been dubbed '*Lemmings* with weapons'. Make of that what you will. What else are you working on? "*Megalomania 2*, which will be exclusive to the Amiga, and also *Soccer* data disks for the quite stupendous *Sensible Soccer*." Jon also exclusively revealed to me that there is also a mind-blowing arcade game, but that's a secret. Thanks Jon.

Jon would like to see a machine produced that "has not one but two CD drives, so you could load the program from one disk while having continuous music coming from the other." Sounds good enough to me! In the future Jon sees Sensible expanding to cater for more console machines rather than just floppy disk-based machines, and they will basically be programming for the Amiga, PC, SNES and MegaDrive machines. Poor ol' Atari. What a shame, hee hee.

Shaun Southern

After releasing *Lotus Turbo Nutter Challenge*, Shaun decided that the world hadn't had enough and he released more Turbo Nuttery games, namely *SuperCars* and *SuperCars II* as well as *Nutter Challenge II*. Now everyone's a nutter 'cos he's just been finishing off *Lotus III, The Ultimate Nutter*. Cheers Shaun.

Shaun hates cars. At least he does now he's written three *Lotus* games and the two *SuperCars* games. Having just played *Lotus III*, I personally think that Shaun has created a real masterpiece, but Shaun is sick of writing simulation-type games where you are basically trying to emulate something you probably wouldn't ever be able to do in real life. What's he doing at the moment? "Apart from finishing off *Lotus III* I've been working on a breathtaking platform game, not unlike *Sonic The Hedgehog*, but with another sickeningly cute character whizzing around your screen." Perhaps the Amiga will finally get its own mascot?

He started writing proper games on a VIC 20, after having played with the school PET, and then rapidly formed *Magnetic Fields* as we know it today with Andrew Morris, his main graphics man. After a long four years, and several car titles later, all Shaun wants to do is enjoy the quiet life. Apparently Crete is his destination general, where he just wants to bask gloriously in the sun and just do nothing at all really.

At a push however, if he were to write for another machine in the future, he would like to see 24-bit colour, 16-channel, 16-bit digital sound and at least 4Mb of free RAM to code in, as well as video and sound RAM. I want one please. Then again, maybe in a few years, such a machine might prove to be an affordable reality. *Lotus III* is a top game.

Mike Montgommery/Steve Kelly



Who are these blokes then? Well together with Eric Matthews, they form the BitMap Bros. So they had to appear in this article somewhere! Currently they are working on *The Chaos Engine*, but for the time being you can look at a sexy picture of some 'ard bloke in the classic *Speedball 2*: Brutal Deluxe.

Mike Montgomery used to be manager of a branch of Woolworths and decided that he'd had enough of the low life and became a programmer. He'd always wanted to know what a computer was so he bought a ZX80 (?) and taught himself how to code.

Ever since then, he's had a "complete curiosity" about computers and loves playing around on any new machine that comes around. "What would be my perfect machine? Probably a RISC-based monster with a 16-million colour palette with millions of hardware sprites."

Mike has also been involved in development on *Gods, Magic Pockets* and the forthcoming *Chaos Engine*.

Steve Kelly used to work as a warehouse manager but due to an incident that screwed up his back, he spent 18 months convalescing and enjoying the relatively unstrenuous and easy lifestyle of sitting on his butt playing computer games. It was then that he learnt how to program.

What would be his perfect machine? "Well actually the new Atari Falcon." Pah! But we'll forgive Steve for the odd indiscretion. Currently he is a designer/programmer and often has to deal with children asking him for free games! As well as having worked on both *Magic Pockets* and *Xenon II*, he is currently working on a 'top' secret project to be announced later this year. Much like everyone else methinks!





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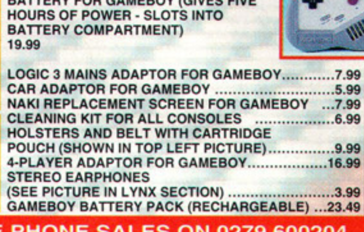
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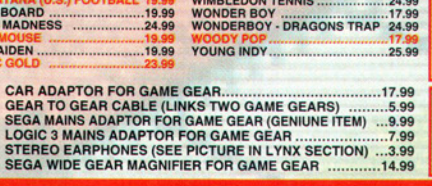
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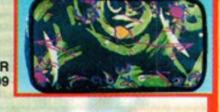
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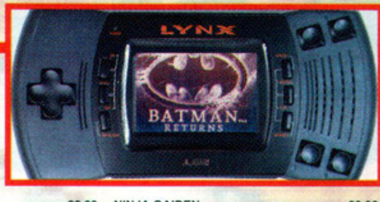
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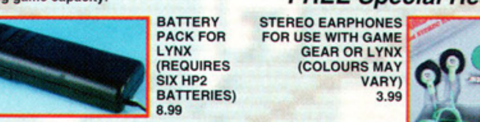
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For an age now the Amiga world has been alight with tales of Gremlin's new Sonic-beater. Now it's here, can it outgun the blue bomber? We put it to the test...

Zool



In the sweet world, spinning at the lollipops with Zool leads to a spray of tasty pick-ups. Collect them for points

You may have heard about *Zool*, you may even have read reviews of it in other magazines. But you're not stupid enough to believe *everything* you read, are you? The truth of the matter is, *Zool* was finished four days before ***Amiga Format*** was due to be printed. Now normally, that late in our schedule it's too late to change anything, but we were so impressed with *Zool* that we had a quick reshuffle of our pages and shoehorned it into this already packed issue. So remember kiddies, this is the latest, the greatest and the most up-to-date review of *Zool* you'll ever read. In fact, it's the first review of the finished game ever to see print.

Expensive PD Demo?

You know as well as I do that £25.99 is a lot of money to pay for a game. You wouldn't buy a record just on the strength of the sleeve (unless it was a Madonna disc maybe), so why buy a game on the strength of the screenshots? So let's play it shall we?

Well, the intro's good, I like this, a funky fresh soundtrack and some ultrafast scrolly visuals, this is as good as a PD demo, and it only costs about 20 times as much. Now I'm getting a message, what does it say? 'Prepare Yourself'. OK, if you say so, but what for, what do I need? Some string? A ten pence piece in case I need to make a phone call? Ah! a joystick and a comfy chair will see me right. Let's press fire...

Like, totally intense dude!

Whoa! the first thing you realise is that it's psychedelically intense, man, and stupendously bright. Now I understand what the 'Prepare Yourself' stuff was all about. First thing, install a pair of shades. That's better, Oakley's in place and I can bear to look at the screen without squinting. We are talking the most outrageously colourful graphics to ever be seen on the screen, and that includes *any* screen, SNES and Megadrive included.

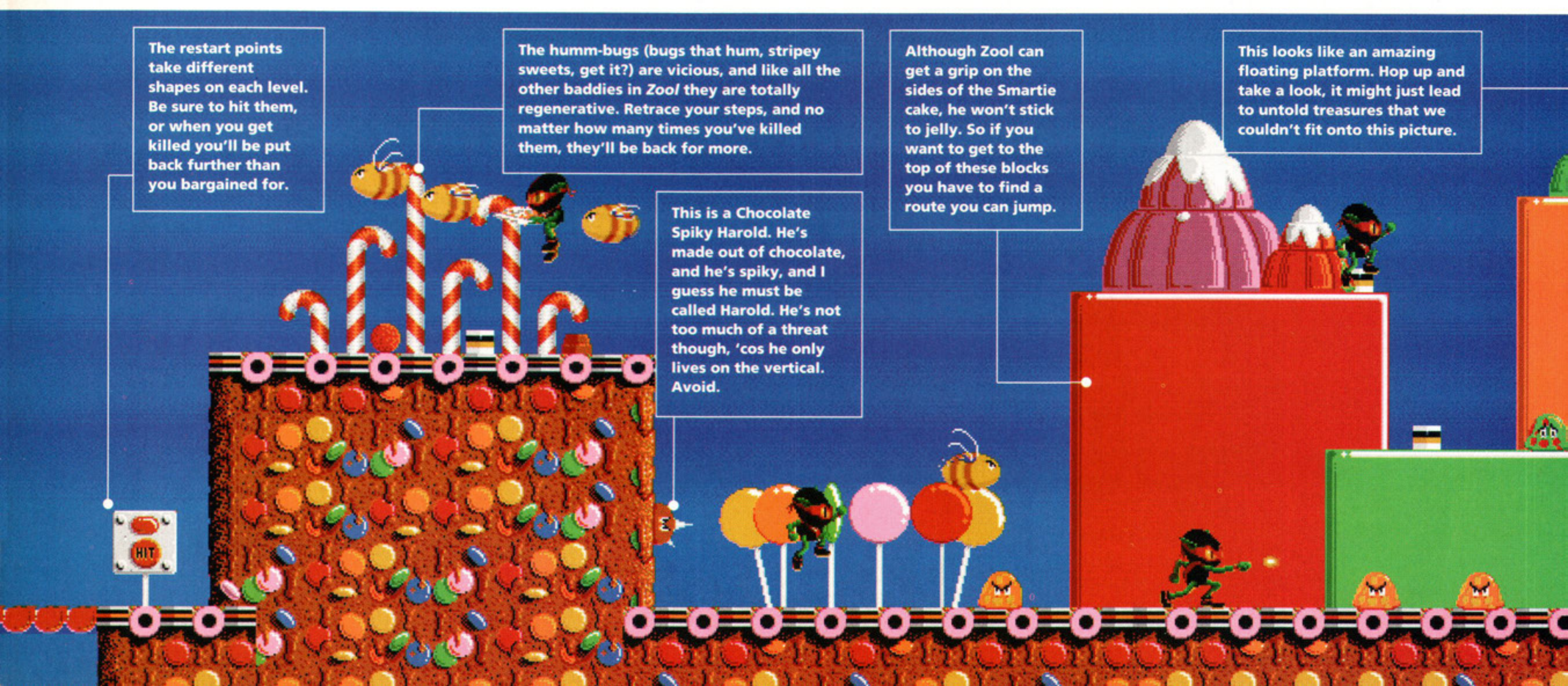
So! this Zool dude, who is he anyway? It says here that he's a 'Ninja of the Nth Dimension' and who am I to argue? He looks like a ninja to me, he's got one of those red scarfs tied over his eyes and everything. And he can do all those mystical ninja tricks, he considers the Tumo Heat, says a few mantras and ngags and the next thing you know he's leaping all over the place kicking and punching and shouting Hai!



And boy is he fast. Oh! you don't know do you, 'cos you haven't seen him yet. Well, let me tell you, he is fast. There's all this talk about *Zool* being Gremlin's sonic beater. Well he's not quite that fast, but he *is* very fast. Makes Mario look like he's on Mogodon, that's for sure. He looks good too, his arms and legs are a bit skinny, but I'm sure that just helps him to move quicker, I mean, you don't see many fat ninjas running around do you? They'd be sumos instead.

“ This is the game that makes Sonic and Mario look like the sad creations of teams of deluded child psychologists that they are ”

Zool's got to fight his way across seven worlds of fiendish foes, all of them things that you'd never expect to have an evil side. He



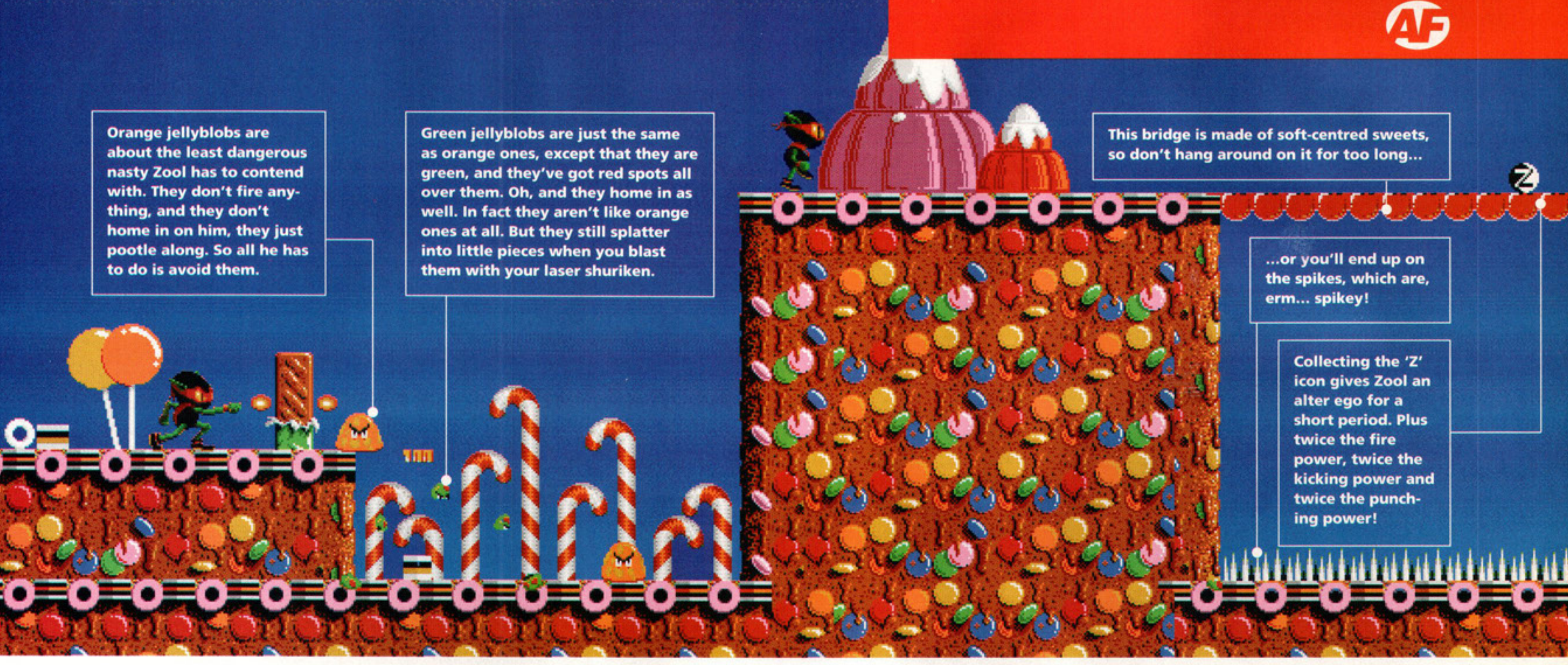
The restart points take different shapes on each level. Be sure to hit them, or when you get killed you'll be put back further than you bargained for.

The humm-bugs (bugs that hum, stripey sweets, get it?) are vicious, and like all the other baddies in *Zool* they are totally regenerative. Retrace your steps, and no matter how many times you've killed them, they'll be back for more.

This is a Chocolate Spiky Harold. He's made out of chocolate, and he's spiky, and I guess he must be called Harold. He's not too much of a threat though, 'cos he only lives on the vertical. Avoid.

Although Zool can get a grip on the sides of the Smartie cake, he won't stick to jelly. So if you want to get to the top of these blocks you have to find a route you can jump.

This looks like an amazing floating platform. Hop up and take a look, it might just lead to untold treasures that we couldn't fit onto this picture.



begins by fighting sweets, yes sweets, or candy for those of you who've been watching too much American TV. As he runs across a world of chocolate smartie cake and jelly, Zool has to fight off Jelly Lumps and Chocolate Spikes. By ninja spinning at the top of lollipops he can release a shower of edible goodies to be collected, each of which yield 100 points.

There really isn't a lot more to it than that: you run, you jump, you kick your way through six worlds of high-speed mayhem. Sure, there's the occasional tricky bit, but we're not talking true 'put your thinking cap on' puzzles here, just bits of the game that require a less than direct approach to reach your destination.

There are areas of the Tool World that need gates activating, but by and large this is a straight-ahead, seat-of-your-pants blast. And fast is the way to play it. The game design is not so fiendish as to place perils just out of sight so when you take a flying leap into the unknown you land on a sea of spikes or fall down an abyss. The levels are so well put together that you can make the most of the game's extreme speed and smoothness.

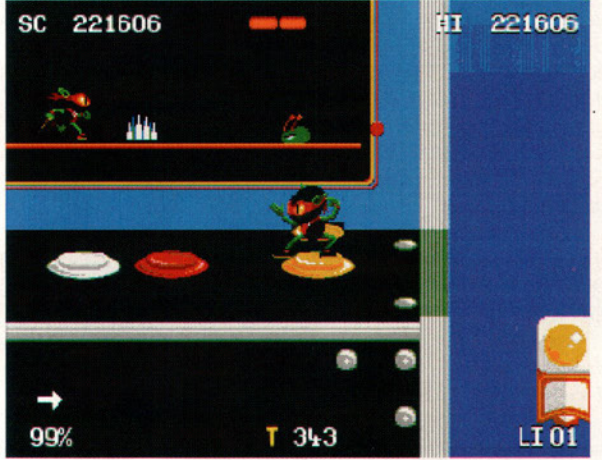
The way to get the most from *Zool* is to put your brain in neutral, turn you reactions up to maximum and go for it. This is a mega-fast, mega-vast mega-blast. From the start of Sweet World to the very end of the game, you can't let your attention slip for a second. The baddies keep coming, the terrain just keeps being a little trickier than you'd hoped, those slopes being a little slippier than you'd imagined and those damned baddies just keep regenerating every time you retrace your steps.

Who needs hedgehogs...

If not for the pause mode it would all be too much for a normal human to take (I mean you need a can of Coke every now and then, and you need to get rid of fluid occasionally too), but this is no territory for normal humans.

Here we are deep in the arcade zone, the land of the player hardened by years of joystick wielding. This is a game that can hold its head up and look the consoles right in the eye. Yes, this is the game that makes *Sonic* and *Mario* look like the sad creations of teams of deluded child psychologists that they are. *Sonic*'s got the speed, Mario has the size and

EVERYBODY'S PLAYING ZOOL (EVEN ZOOL)



When Zool reaches the Fun Fair World, he has to scale the side of an arcade machine. After he's gone up and over the top he can clamber on to the control panel and jump on the buttons. The screen says press start (the yellow button), now you can use the white and red buttons to jump the spikes and fire at the Jelly Blobs. Guess what, he's playing *Zool*.

ARE ALL WALLS WHAT THEY SEEM?

It's worth giving the scenery a good investigation, because not everything is as it seems on first impression. Standing at the bottom of this pit, you can't see the big Mint with a Hole, but after a few cyber-punches it becomes obvious that there's a hidden route afoot. The 100,000 points bonus won't go amiss either, especially when you consider that most pick-ups in *Zool* give a measly 100 points. But don't spend hours looking around, there's a time bonus too.



the gameplay, *Zool*'s got both. And when you're bored with playing games (and it will take you an age and a half to get bored of *Zool*) I'd like to see you use a console to digitise some pictures or write a hit record.

Let's face it, if *Sonic* was being reviewed in ***Amiga Format*** it would get ooh, about 91 per cent, sure that's good, but when you compare it to *Zool*'s massive... ah but that would be telling. You'll have to read on to find out, so don't cheat and go looking at the bottom of the page ahead of time. The only excuse for anyone to buy a console now would be Gremlin developing *Zool* for the GameGear.

The game is far from faultless though, it would have been nice to see a few more puzzles, it would've been nice to be rewarded for obscure things like only collecting every fifth pick up. In short, it could have more depth. But as soon as you begin to play, any reservations you may have had evaporate in an instant. Let's face it, you just don't have time to play puzzle games when you're fighting caustic cuties at this frenetic pace.

Some people, our ex-Screeplay Editor Trenton Webb for one, criticise this type of game for not being intellectually stimulating enough, but by and large those kind of people who stay at home playing chess rather than going out hang-gliding. (I must apologise right now for implicating Trent in this vicious slur on couch potatoes, because he would be the first to jump off a tall building tied to nothing but an elastic band.)

But what I'm trying to say is, No! this isn't an intellectually stimulating game, it's an exciting game. Possibly, no definitely the most exciting game ever seen on the Amiga, which is itself the most exciting computer ever. Which means, if I've done my sums right, that *Zool* is the... roll of the drums, most exciting computer game ever. Yes, there I've gone and said it. Any complaints, send them on a post card to *Amiga Power* at this address, cause I really don't wanna know. This is the one brothers and sisters, the game that kicks out all the jams, the most unrelenting-computer gaming experience this side of the virtual orgasm.

Zool is nothing new

Hell, I know I should really say more about the game, but what is there to say, you've seen dozens of games like this before. You shoot at things, you punch things, you kick things, and they die. Every so often the things you punch and kick turn into goodies, and you collect the goodies and you get points, and if you finish a level in a fast time then you get points for that too, and after three levels there is a Boss, and he's big and tough and you have to kill him too. And there are power ups, and it isn't always to get from A to B, so you have to take a round-about route, and No! No! No! it all sounds so mundane doesn't it.

I wish I could tell you that *Zool* breaks the mould, banishes the tedium, redefines the cutesy platform concept, but it doesn't. It conforms in every way to what you'd expect from a perfect cutesy platform game. And in doing so it has become the perfect platform game. If I were to go on *Desert Island Floppies* this would have to be right up there with the Smashing Pumpkins album and a copy of *Breakfast of Champions* as one of the things I could not live without. Oh! and a ruddy great solar cell to power my Amiga with, too.

In fact *Zool* is so conformist that it even goes along with the current trend of having sub games. For those new to this term a sub game is a computer game that simulates piloting an underwater military vessel (*no it's not, stop being sill and get on with it – Ed*).

A sub game really is another game, subsidiary to the main game, but contained within it. And *Zool* has two. The first is level seven, or Shoot-em-up World as Gremlin have imaginatively called it. But, rather than being an arcade action game it's a... shoot-em-up.

Being level seven you might expect it to come before level eight, but there isn't a level eight. So Gremlin, being bright chaps, thought they should find somewhere else to put it. In the end they hid it, and not just in one place where you might stand a sporting chance of finding it, but all over the place. So you might be tearing along fighting murderous marbles in Toy World when you will suddenly be transported by a chrono-synclastic infundibulum to a horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up. If this happens, do not adjust your set, normal service will resume as soon as you get killed.

Melody Maker and NME

The option screen at the start of *Zool* lets you select the soundtrack. The musicless sound effects are excellent, and really help you tell what's going on in the game, but the other audio tracks are excellent too, you can choose from rave, rock, green and funk. The rave track is the best for an in-game soundtrack, but the best music of all is the stuff they play over the 'Get Ready' screen. And while this is playing you get a cute little metallic robot voice telling you to... get ready.

These screens also feature a subtle, but witty, backdrop that scrolls behind the text at an amazing rate. It isn't the intro screens that matter though. Excellent as they are, it's the game they sandwich between them that we are here to pay homage to. If you like all things cute and colourful, you'll love this, and if you aren't predisposed to platform games you'll still love it. If you don't you need an analyst for your deep-seated alienation complex.

If you only buy one game this year... you aren't spending enough on computer software.

Marcus Dyson

Zool
Gremlin ■ £25.99

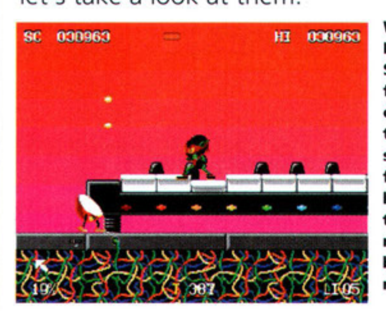
- A mind-blowing trip with the volume turned up graphics, get thermonuclear protection before you look at these screens.
- Scrolling that's smoother 'n' the cream in those horrible American cakes.
- Ultra-responsive control method makes dod-gin', weavin', duckin' and divin' a cinch.
- From Yorkshire.
- A mega-fast, mega-vast mega-blast.



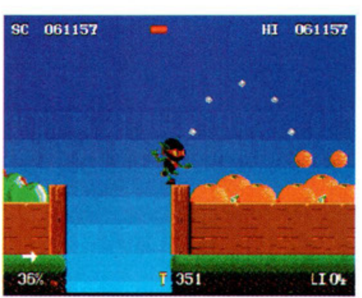
95%

DISCOVER NEW WORLDS

There are seven worlds that *Zool* must conquer, let's take a look at them.



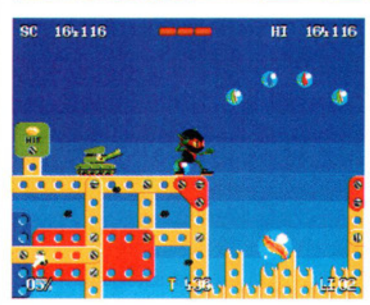
WORLD TWO
Music world.
Sinful cymbals and dreadful drums make life a cacophony as you venture through this amplifier-strewn soundscape. Pause for a while on this giant keyboard and play a few tunes and look out for the remote control handsets, because they're your restart points.



WORLD THREE
Fruit World.
Crazy carrots and touchy tomatoes look to cream you in this vegetable voyage. Take great care with the grapes, if you don't polish them off they either get you, or plant themselves and send out new wine fruit to do you in. Chop the carrot heads for bonus pickups.



WORLD FOUR
Tool World.
Brutish ballbearings and wagish woodworm are out to nail you in this hardware shop from hell. Glide along the screw head slipways and greased glideways as you journey through this metallic mayhem. Watch out, it's a kind of Texas chainstore massacre.



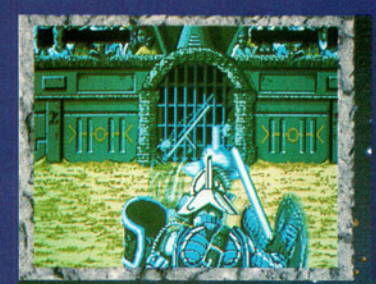
WORLD FIVE
Toy World
Murderous marbles and terrorist toy tanks make this level no playtime. Mind the Meccano, the ripped ends are perilously sharp. The tanks are virtually indestructible, so give them a wide birth. Make the most of the numerous restart points, you're going to need them.



WORLD SIX
Fun Fair World.
Horrific hammers and chaotic candyfloss come gunning for you in this unfairground. Don't just hang around on the bouncy castle, you've got a game to finish. But make sure you visit the amusement arcade, this is your big chance to have a game of *Zool*.



WORLD SEVEN
Shoot-em-up world.
You can find yourself playing shoot-em-ups when you least expect it, like right in the middle of one of the other levels of *Zool*. This level is hidden throughout the games, and it is about as tough as horizontal scrollers come. When you get killed you go back to the main game.



PC VGA

Part 2 of the B.A.T. saga takes place in Roma 2, the capital city of Shedishan, a planet in the B8 system. This time you are Jehan Menasis, an agent of the famous Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters. Your mission: crush the unscrupulous KOSHAN which holds an almost complete monopoly of the precious Echiatone 21.

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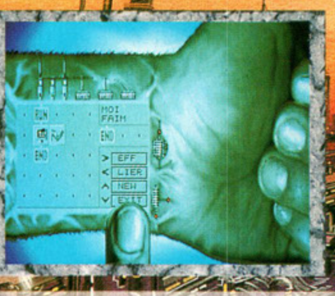
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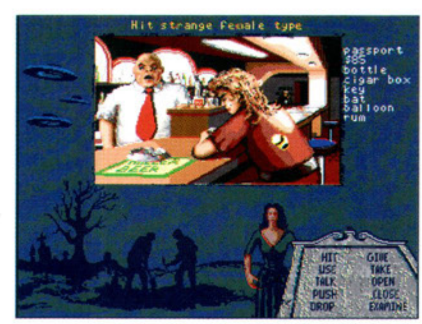


It's time to move among the grave robbers and space aliens of yet another game-of-the-film conversion and discover a very strange world indeed…

Plan 9 From Outer Space



The ugly brute with the shovel hands is your client, a film producer, who wants you to find six missing reels of *Plan 9* the movie. The strange-looking wench below him is Vampira, a star of the film.



Good grief… it's that bald bloke again. His features are based on a 400-pound wrestler who starred in the film. It's a pretty good likeness.



This bit of text in an example of the humour level of the game. I only didn't laugh out loud for fear that my head would have fallen off…

Hands up those who used to watch *Worst of Hollywood* on Channel Four. OK, maybe a lot of you are too young to remember, so let me elaborate. Basically, it was a series which concentrated on early sci-fi films, or 'B-movies', which came out of the film capital alongside the bigger, more expensive productions. Films with stupendous titles such as *Them!*, *Creeping Terror* and *I Walked With A Zombie* were among those shown, and as such the Hollywood B-movie built up a cult status which it had not seen since the 1950s.

In 1959 a director called Edward D Wood Jr, less than famous from his earlier films such as *Glen or Glenda?* and *Jail Bait*, finished work on a film which he called his 'little jewel'. That film was *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, a movie which catapulted Wood to the status of a household name overnight. Not because of its superb acting or its gripping dialogue, but because it was seen by most movie-goers as the trashiest film ever made! Even now, 33 years later, it is still regarded by enthusiasts as the definitive 'Worst of Hollywood' (although some of the more recent movies starring Madonna come close).

INTERESTING FACT NUMBER ONE

According to Harry and Michael Medved (founders of The Golden Turkey Awards in which Plan 9 won first prize), Bela Lugosi actually died before the film was released. The footage in which he is featured was intended for a completely different movie, called 'The Tomb of The Vampire', which never made it to the Box Office!

Reward the innocent

So, as with all popular films, *Plan 9* has finally made it on to the computer scene. The producers, Gremlin Graphics, have decided to keep up with tradition and create a point-and-click graphical adventure (similar in style to the recent *Hook*), and package it together with a video of the original film!

Surprisingly, though, the game is not based on the film at all (hooray! I hear you cry). Instead, it casts you as a small-time private eye who is hired by a producer to locate the six missing reels of the original movie – a refreshing change to the normal film-to-game conversion.

The adventure begins in a film producer's office, where you are given your brief and $100. The studio is sparse, containing an editing suite, a bathroom and a cupboard that contains a few weird film props. Outside you may find a building site, with a man who looks like a renegade from the recent series *Dinosaurs*; a cafe with a waitress who spends all her time on the phone; and 'The Hub Cap', a pub with just three occupants. Before you get around to solving any puzzles, that's the entire scenario. Bit small, isn't it?

Punish the guilty

Wandering around these areas and talking to the people takes all of, oh, five minutes, and then you find yourself stuck, with seemingly nothing to do and no clues to help you. If you return to any of the characters and talk to them again, you will always receive the same replies (which rapidly become annoying). For example, attempting to talk to the man in the cafe comes up with: "He seems to be engrossed in his food," when he obviously isn't – he's smoking a cigarette!

Similarly, examining the items dotted around the adventure often results in the age-old reply: "There's nothing special about it." I remember this particular witty retort being annoying in the old Scott Adams adventures on the VIC-20 (anybody remember them?) - but to include them in a graphic adventure on a computer as powerful as the Amiga is nothing

THE PLOT THAT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE

Without giving too much away, here is the basic story of *Plan 9* - The Movie…



"Big Mac, fries… Oh dear, perhaps I won't have that shake after all…"

The tale begins in a graveyard, where 'The Ghoul Man' (Bela Lugosi) and the imaginatively titled 'Ghoul Woman' are hanging around after being resurrected from the dead by space aliens. The pair are spotted by a couple of gravediggers who are promptly slaughtered, and the murder is reported to the local constabulary.

Inspector Clay bravely steps forward to investigate. He goes off into the mist, and is promptly turned into a zombie by the ghoulish couple. The rest of the police force alert the US Army to the problem, who discover the presence of flying saucers, and enlist all the military force of the United States to try and get rid of them.

Amid the furore a young pilot sees his young wife kidnapped by the undead Clay, and heroically decides to try and rescue her himself. This is where the real fun begins.

Wooden sets, terrible screenplay, lifeless acting and unconvincing UFOs join together to make this film what it is today –completely and utterly awful! As long as you keep your tongue firmly planted in one cheek while you're watching it, though, it's great entertainment!



Der ner ner ner ner ner ner ner, der ner ner ner ner ner ner ner BAT - MAAAAN!!! "Holy cow pats Batman, the film reel!". "Holy mackerel, Robin. I think we're in the wrong game!" Der ner ner etc...



If you hit palm trees, coconuts tend to fall out. Oh, I see two already have. Oo-er! I wonder if what they say about bodybuilders is true...



No, this isn't a junk shop, it's a prop room. Note the silver plate on the right, along with the styrofoam ball (destroys the atmos, you know...)

short of appalling. I mean, why include items in the game and not provide a description? Is it because there is not enough memory? Come on guys, this is 1992!

Because of these shortcomings, much of the time during the adventure is spent tearing your hair out in frustration. The few good points which the game possesses are unfortunately quite short-lived – for instance, the haunting soundtrack adds a good atmosphere but becomes repetitive fairly quickly, while the sampled effects are very good but too sparse. The graphics, though, are the one redeeming point. They are generally well done, with some nicely drawn screens and the odd bit of reasonable animation.

The humorous element of the game, while rather witty at first, quickly joins most of the other elements for a quick round of 'who's the most lame and repetitive?', and merely consists of the odd pun (such as a vampire's corpse being hungry for 'stake') and a few sarcastic comments.

INTERESTING FACT NUMBER TWO
The flying saucers in the film were not, as people are generally led to believe, hub caps, but in fact they were paper plates sprayed silver and decorated to look like UFOs!

Turkey stakes

It's a shame in a way, but all games like this are bound to be compared to the likes of *Monkey Island*, which set an extremely high standard that is difficult to match. Unfortunately, *Plan 9* doesn't even come close. The authors have obviously noted the film's reputation, and attempted to produce a game which makes up for all of its shortcomings. Unfortunately, the game manages to retain all the dull, cardboard atmosphere and tarnished qualities of the original. Maybe it should just go and join its friends down on Matthew's Norfolk farms...

Andy Nuttall

Plan 9 From Outer Space
Gremlin ■ £34.99

- Some nice graphics, with a smattering of animation thrown in for good measure.
- Extremely dated and basic gameplay.
- Atmospheric but repetitive soundtrack, with some good sampled effects.
- Repetitive, repetitive and repetitive. (With a side order of repetitiveness.)



45%



OCTOBER ISSUE OUT NOW!

The Ultimate Autumn Preview returns in a mammoth 20-page extravaganza. Plus! Reviews of *Zool*, *Lotus 3*, *Beast 3* and *Putty*, and the latest news and tips.

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Mega *meg (ə-)*, very big, **100%** Sega Mega Drive, comin' at ya on Thursday 17 September (that's soon). Magazine designed for all serious Sega gamesplayers. aka: the mag with the most, *The* guide to **Mega Drive and beyond…** Slogan: Got a SNES? That's you stuffed then. Philosophy: to be the best. From the makers of ***Amiga Format*** comes the ultimate guide to 16-bit Sega gamesplaying: essential news, in-depth reviews, gamesplaying guides and dirty cheats. Be part of it.



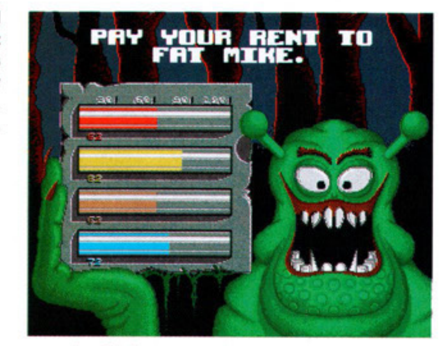
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After a few days of solid planting and building, the fields soon look like an industrial complex. But beware of a title-deed mix-up which will cost you plenty of time.

I wish my landlord would be content with a bag of snails for his monthly rent. Fat Mike is, but he's an alien.



Traders

With a name like *Traders*, you're probably expecting something like *Elite*, or perhaps a stock-market simulator. Instead it's a very odd, but mildly entertaining game for up to four players. Trading forms a major part of the game, but you would be wrong again if you thought this was all about exchanging cash. We're talking snail-trading here. Good old-fashioned barter, based on flowers, water, perfume, bugs, sapphires and... snails. Told you it was weird!

Traders is deep, and it takes a while to get used to, let alone become good at. It's full of complex relationships between trading currencies and a host of nonsense which just adds to the confusion. In a nutshell, it's a game where the winner is the player who makes the most cash – but there's plenty more to it than that.

Escargot

The game takes place on a planet which used to be Earth. The owner of this planet is a huge green snail called Fat Mike. He owns all the land which the four players use to make their money and grow their crops on. As a result he's entitled to a backhander (coolly referred to as 'rent') every week. If you don't pay, Fat Mike will begin 'eviction processes'.

The weirdest thing is the way you use the land you borrow. There are a number of 'cash-crops' which you can barter with later on, and their success depends on the the weather. The trouble is, each crop requires an amount of the other crops. For example, Polmi rabbits (one of the possible crops) require flowers every week (or they won't dig for water). If you have a good supply of Mabba Roses, your rabbits are satisfied, but if not, you need to exchange another surplus crop for the flowers you need.

Bart simply

The barter system is the most difficult part. At the start of a bartering session, you have to decide whether you're going to sell or buy. Then, during the exchange phase, you raise or lower your price to match that of the seller or buyer. Sounds simple, but it's done with very strange graphics, and the whole thing takes seconds. Consequently, it's easy to overspend.

Traders isn't simply about trading. There's a vast number of incidental screens and sub-games which require a bit of thought. There's a robot war section, where you can attack (and defend) plots of land in an attempt to increase your land-area. There's a space-rocket section where you send out rockets to far-off planets to retrieve snails for Fat Mike. He even holds a contest for the most prolific snail-collectors, with the prize of an extra field for your collection.

Traders is, as I've said, an odd game. The graphics are twee (they have a tacky cartoon-feel which doesn't quite work) and the music is non-descript. But there's a good deal of entertainment, especially if you're playing against three other human competitors. *Traders* doesn't have the appeal of games like *Elite*, but it's still worth a look. If there's nothing else you fancy on the shelves this month, you could do a lot worse than this.

Neil Jackson

FAT MIKE'S FARMING TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL TRADING

If you're going to trade, you need to know what you can grow and what it produces – roses need water and produce perfume, for example. Here's a table of the various cash-crops' needs and end produce:	BASIN	RABBITS	ROSES
BUILDING MATERIAL You'll need this before you can start generating crops, though how you make rabbits from perfume...	WATER	PERFUME	ROSES
UPKEEP MATERIAL without upkeep, your crop will soon die or cease to produce anything worthwhile	PERFUME	ROSES	WATER
PRODUCES if you're lucky, a well-nurtured crop produces the following goodies which you can trade	ROSES	WATER	PERFUME
The weather affects the quantities of crops that are produced each cycle, but each crop is affected differently:			
SUN/HEAT	NO EFFECT	BAD	GOOD
WIND/HURRICANE	GOOD	NO EFFECT	BAD
RAIN/SNOW	BAD	GOOD	NO EFFECT

Traders
Linel/DI ■ £29.99

- The cartoon graphics don't really make *Traders* look that appealing – but it is.
- Lots and lots of sub-games and strange events to get involved in.
- Can get a bit repetitive when you've been through the whole trading cycle a few times.
- More fun when you're playing in a group of four human players.
- Missable, but worth a look.



70%



American fotball isn't all about enormous blokes with enormous muscles hammering each other into the ground. Oh, no. It's full of intelligence and strategy. Honest.



For sale: ten New Worlds, superficially different from the originals, but essentially exactly the same. What did you expect... Utopia?

Touchdown

Strike Force Design ■ £14.95

Strike Force Design's maiden release attempts to capture the spirit of American football with green digitised pictures of bulky, well-padded men throwing themselves at each other's feet.

You opt either to let the computer do all the hard work and miss out on the gameplay, skipping straight to that week's results, or you can become more involved with the ins and outs of each game, choosing each move as it is played. Admittedly American footy tactics take a bit of mastering, but the manual explains them clearly and concisely, with only a little of the obligatory waffling.

Touchdown **is not really the thing for total novices unless you're prepared to examine the rule books or you're a whiz with statistics (the whole game is based on statistical analysis of yardages). But the hardened fan, who thinks he can do better than the Monarch's coach did last season, could have a fair old amount of fun.**

Clare Hodgson


Verdict 65%

Utopia — The New Worlds

Gremlin Graphics ■ £14.99

The first thing you should know about *Utopia – The New Worlds* is that you need a copy of the original *Utopia* to play it on. The *New Worlds* disk is basically just another bundle of scenarios to play with – the actual gameplay mechanics of *Utopia* haven't really changed at all.

There are 10 new scenarios and each has its own distinct graphic changes but the new graphics aren't all that amazing, and occasionally they're down-right bland. We expected to see new buildings, but sadly, they're the same – only the ground-patterns and the objects which form the terrain are different.

On the game-plot front, things are a little better. There are 10 new alien races to meet, destroy, and moralise over later. New problems beset your weary colonists on each new mission, and things are generally tougher all over. Not bad, as add-on scenarios go, but it doesn't quite pack the same punch as the original.

Neil Jackson

Verdict 74%

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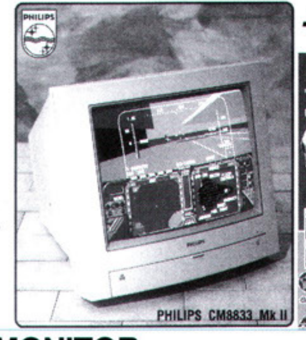
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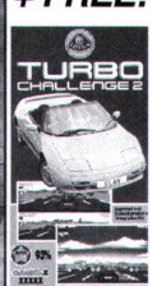
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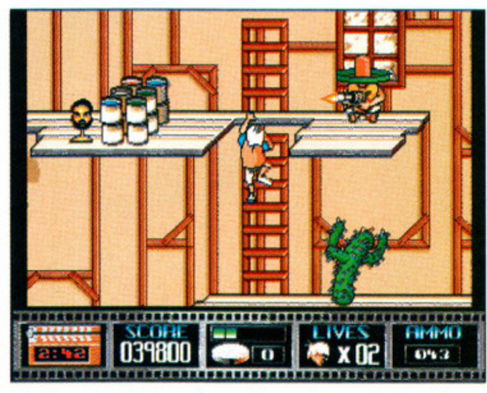
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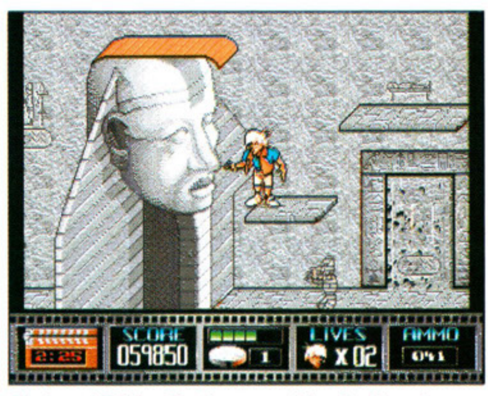


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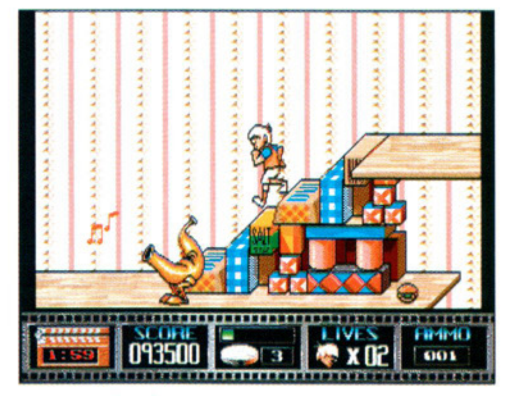
Westworld. OK, I can live with cowboys wielding six-shooters, but spiky condoms with arms? Never.



Black and White. Clutch, approaching the big ugly head, attempts to free the deadly nose vole of doom.



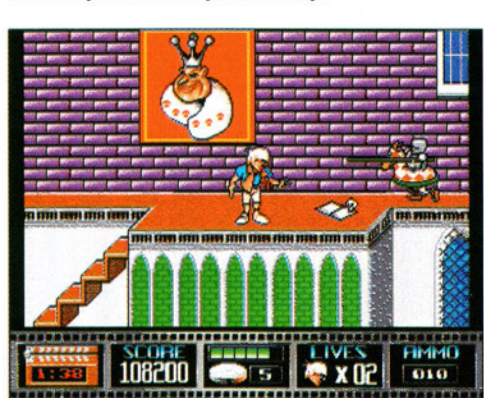
Horror. "Get back down into your hole, Mother. You know very well it's not your birthday!"



Cartoon. All right, this may be only a game, but there really isn't any excuse for that wallpaper.



Sci-Fi. *Plan 9 From Outer Space*? Nah, more like 'Attack of the Deadly Bulb-Eared Man From Mars'.



Fantasy. Come on down to Fantasyland! It's crazy! It's silly! It's the wackiest hooouuuse on the Amiga!

Premiere

Clutch Gable, the editor of Core Pictures' new film production, is in big trouble. Editing into the early hours of the morning, he finds himself dozing further and further into slumberland, eventually sinking into a deep, deep sleep (a bit like most of the staff of ***Amiga Format***, methinks).

Woken in the morning by a phone call from his irate boss, he discovers that his film reels are missing and that all his hard work has been filched by the company's nearest rivals, Grumbling Pictures. Naturally he is a little annoyed and, being a heroic sort of chap, he takes it upon himself to rescue them. And guess what? Yes, you take on the role of Clutch in his quest.

Grumbleweeds?

As it turns out, the six film reels have been strategically placed in six different film sets around the Grumbling studios. Each set has a different theme, from cowboy western to sci-fi adventure, and in order to root out the film Clutch must take on all manner of baddies who are out to prevent him finding it.

The nasties in the game are relevant to each set; for example in the western you have cowboys and indians, tumbleweed and circling vultures, while in the black-and-white setting you'll find mummies, moving hieroglyphics and slinky black cats. The music also fits the bill perfectly, with some natty tunes belting out of your Amiga monitor which really add to the atmosphere of the game.

Passing through one of the doors in each set will take you 'backstage', away from the film scenario and into a world of scaffolding, props and film cameras. Some of the nasties can be found here as well (rehearsing, I suppose) and they're just as deadly as their Equity card carrying colleagues. Help is at hand in the form of a variety of weapons which may be picked up along the way and can be used to vanquish any foe you come across. From the six-shooter of the westworld to the magic spells of fantasyland, they are always there in great abundance.

After each level a bonus game must be completed before the film reel can be retrieved. This takes the form of a short scene from a film which must be acted out by Clutch himself. For example, at the end of the black-and-white film level our hero must ride a truck along a railway line, collecting ammo and dodging various obstacles, while the sci-fi scene ends with a scrolling shoot-em-up. This all adds to the fun of the game, providing a much-needed break from the platform sections.

Not-so-tiny 'Toons

And so goes the story of *Premiere*. Some may consider it to be 'just another platform game', but I reckon it's got enough style and imaginative content to blow most others of the genre out of the water. Each level requires thought to complete (as well as some nifty joystick action) because several puzzles must be solved before the route to the exit becomes apparent.

Instead of the usual sprites, here you have large cartoon-type characters that are very cute and nicely animated, and they are set against some superbly drawn backdrops. The control system takes a bit of getting used to, but after a while you'll find yourself zooming Clutch about the screen with the greatest of ease.

So is it ***Amiga Format*** Gold quality? Well, it's close, but unfortunately it doesn't quite make it, mainly because the action is pretty similar on each level and so tends to get just a wee bit repetitive. The in-between levels break this up though, and all in all, *Premiere* is a hell of a game. It looks pretty, plays well and presents a great challenge to all platform freaks out there who are looking for something just that bit different.

Andy Nuttall

Premiere
Core Design Ltd ■ 25.99

- Excellent presentation, especially the superb film-style intro sequence.
- Brilliant, colourful cartoon-style graphics.
- Main screens can get a little repetitive after prolonged sessions…
- …but the in-between-level games make up for that admirably.



FOR THE AMIGA

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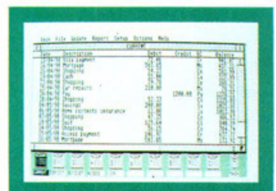


If you run a personal bank account and have an AMIGA then you need "PFM PLUS"

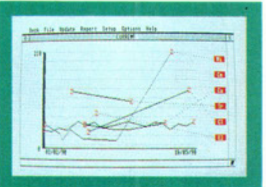
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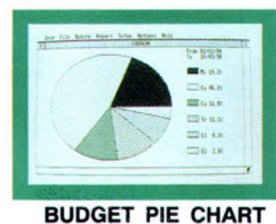
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MAIN ACCOUNT SCREEN



TREND GRAPH



BALANCE PLOT GRAPH

BUDGET PIE CHART

BUDGET COMPARISION BAR GRAPH

PERSONAL FINANCE PROGRAM BY PETER VEALE
AMIGA CONVERSION BY DAN LENNARD

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Entry Posting
Transactions made on one account can be automatically 'posted' to a second account. PFM Plus displays full details of entry sources and destinations. This feature also applies to standing orders.

Multiple Views
Up to 5 views of any one window can be displayed at the same time. this allows different parts of the account to be visible through independent scrolling, or copies of graphs to be displayed covering different time periods. a total of 67 windows are defined.

Account Files
Each file contains accounts and standing order entries, budget details and full information on the sizes and positions of all account windows.

Auto Balance
Automatic account balancing against statement. Facility to continue search for further balance matches.

Upgrading from PFM
PFM Plus includes a utility to convert original PFM Files to the new format, so you need not lose valuable data by upgrading.

Printouts
On-screen displays and printouts for budget comparisons tables and account summaries, in addition to the normal statement and standing order printouts

Printer Formatting
Extensive control over the format of printing statements allowing alternative character pitches, bold underlining and italics printing. Printer control codes defined in separate configuration file.

User Options
Many configuration options can be controlled by the user. Examples include entry defaults, palette, initial path and data file names. All options including desktop icon positions may be saved to disk.

Desktop
PFM Plus uses workbench desktop from which accounts may be selected. The desktop also includes an analog clock and a four function calculator. the calculator can be used even if it is not in the top window. Desktop icons can be re-arranged as required

Graphs
Four different types of graph plot are available. A balance plot, a pie chart showing selected budget categories, a budget comparison bar chart and a trend graph. The trend graph can be used to show long term increases or decreases in your bills. All graphs auto-scale to fit window size.

Search
Account search facility using search mask with wild cards.

Key Short-Cuts
Most mouse and menu operations can also be selected by a key stroke.

Help
On -line help dialogs cover a range of key topics

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Do you fancy yourself as a sleek, attractive woman with a mystery to solve? Or do you just fancy yourself? **James Leach** sorts out his psychoses in a French-produced, adult-orientated Interactive adventure...

Fascination



The big grimy city. All of life is here, except for those elements that live (and love) in the country-side, obviously. So much of life is here, except for the rural-dwelling sections.

You can tell when you're having 'one of those days'. First your tights ladder, then your high-heel snaps off as you rush to the departure gate and finally, as you're settling down with *Vogue* on the plane, a man dies in the next seat. What's worse, he gives you a briefcase with a vial of something incredibly secret in it. As life slips away from him before your disbelieving eyes, he croaks something like: "Take this briefcase to the President of the Quantum Unlimited Lab in Miami." Then he croaks, full stop.

Thus begins a mystery that might chill your very heart, still your blood and enlarge your liver, in which you play a gorgeous brunette called Doralice. Pronounce that 'leese' not 'lice'.

Hormone imbalance

The game itself is one of the sort where you point at things shown in the locations, and if the computer recognises them it enables you to pick them up, use them, keep them or drink them. It's called 'Interactivity'. What happens is that you slowly build up a picture of what you can use with what, and what effects this might have. Call it logic, call it common sense, call it knowing how the programmers' minds work. The result is that you slowly progress along through an adventure planned out in meticulous detail.

Monkey Island 2, you'll be thinking. Yes, it's pretty similar to that in the way that it works, but doesn't have the same polished feel. The fantasy setting is obviously absent, so you end up looking at screens of not particularly interesting hotel rooms and suchlike.



You can talk and show things to other people. They only give you information once though, so keep a notepad around and write down everything you hear. You won't get a second chance.

OK, so you're playing a woman. How does this affect the game? Well you might hope that it redresses the imbalance in favour of males in computer software, but, er, you'd better take a look at what happens when you pop slinkily into the shower. A nude woman is what happens. A nude showering woman appears on the screen in several poses, all designed to start a hormonal reaction in the (male) players of the game. Yes, it's sad to say but they have to stoop to stuff like this (and quite early on in the sequence of events, too).

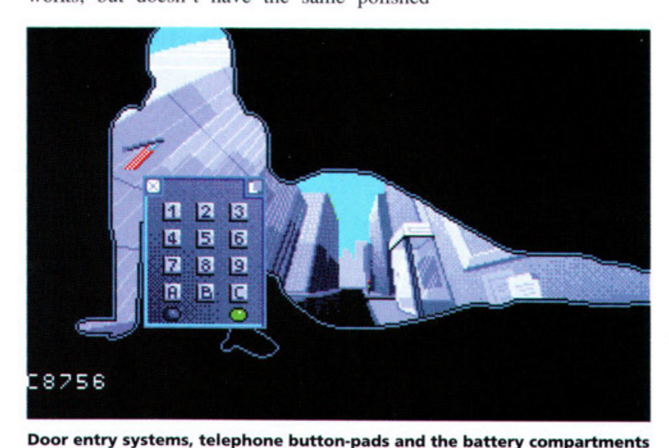
"A stunning insight into the female psyche it is not"

But isn't this what adult-orientated software is about? Maybe, but it doesn't add to the plot and it certainly doesn't make you feel at ease with the the gorgeous female you're supposed to be playing. A stunning insight into the female psyche it is not.

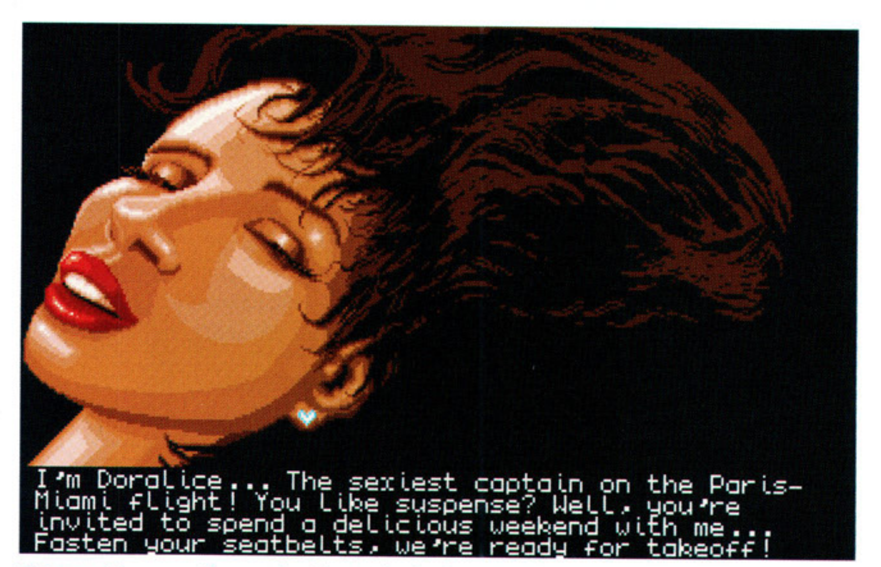
As you progress through the game, you realise that it isn't very flexible. The route you're supposed to take is pretty clearly defined. The very nature of interactive games is such that you can't go wandering off where you please. There just isn't room for all that extraneous data. This means that all you need to do is to be persistent. Collect everything you can, try using everything you can and make the odd logical leap.

For example, there's a wall-socket, an adaptor and a toothbrush with different voltage settings. How much lateral thinking is required to bring these three items together? And when you do, lo! – another item is discovered, which interacts with several other items later in the game. This is pretty much how you progress through the game that is *Fascination*.

The graphics are very much the same as you've seen before. Neatly drawn, with the emphasis on a slightly cartoony feel, they are clear enough to display everything you're supposed to see. The game contains plenty of small objects resting in fairly inaccessible places, and the only way to get these is to see them, then move the mouse over to them. The graphics have been drawn with this in mind, so



Door entry systems, telephone button-pads and the battery compartments of small electrical items abound in *Fascination*. This obsession with the technical minutiae of life both adds realistic detail and annoys the life out of you if you haven't written everything down as you discover it.



This gregarious, sprouting creature is actually the character you play in *Fascination*. Ignore that nonsense about pilots and stuff. This is definitely not a flight sim.



If you're going to Miami, be prepared for a serious amount of pool-lounging, idle conversation-making and leisurely mystery solving. Oh to a witness the lifestyles of the rich and infamous.

you don't feel cheated because you haven't noticed a vital clue. Roaming the mouse around and seeing what shape it changes to is also a good way of sorting out what you can interact with in the game.

The system used is pretty fool-proof, even if it does involve a disproportionate amount of clicking 'OK' when you've decided on what course of action you are going to take. *Fascination* has a vein of humour running through it which borders on the witty. This sits uneasily with the voyeuristic 'adult-orientation' which pervades it.

The interaction with other people in the game is a bit of a let-down. They seem only to give you the information you need, then clam up. Thus all you have to do is ask them your pressing questions once and the answers are magically revealed with little further brain-usage by the player.

Overall, *Fascination* is a competent attempt at a mouse-controlled adventure. The setting isn't inspiring, though, and the structure a little too rigid and formulaic. The sexism (for such it is) doesn't help, either.

Up against *Monkey Island 2*, it crumbles into insignificance. But to compare it to the king of the genre is a little unfair, as the style is so different.

Fascination is a pretty well-presented product. It's just a little too linear and lacks the touches which would make it feel special. Jet aircraft, pool-side cocktails and disrobed females don't really cut it.

James Leach

Fascination
Tomahawk ■ £29.99

- Plenty of well-drawn locations, packed with objects to fiddle with.
- Everything is pretty logical, and perseverance always seems to pay off.
- Almost non-existent manual doesn't set the scene or give you much useful info.
- It's sometimes irritatingly slow.
- Point and click movement is a bit wearisome, too.



65%

Win two adventures

WIN YOURSELF A COPY OF SSI'S LATEST ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

Thanks to those awfully big chaps and chapesses at US Gold and SSI, we can offer you the chance to win not one, but two, brand new SSI role-playing games, *The Dark Queen of Krynn* and *Treasures of the Savage Frontier*. We've got 10 copies of each to give away, so there's more than one chance to win.

All you've got to do is identify three other US Gold games from the modified screenshots below. Easy? Maybe not, especially because you won't find these pictures elsewhere in the magazine like we do with the Spot the Shot puzzle every month. So to give you a bit of a chance, we've made it multiple-guess... er, choice.

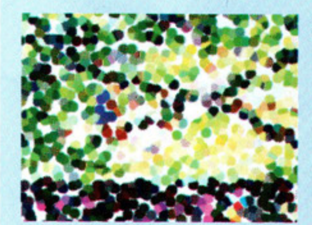
When you've worked it out just jot your answers and your name and address (very important, that bit) on a postcard or the back of an envelope, and send it to us at:

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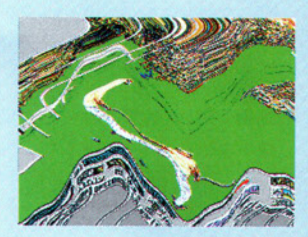
THE SCREENSHOTS



1 A *Secret of Monkey Island*
B *Gauntlet*
C *Out Run Europa*



2 A *G-LOC*
B *LeChuck's Revenge (Monkey Island 2)*
C *Eye of the Beholder 2*



3 A *Links*
B *Conflict Korea*
C *Legend of Valour*

THE ROLES

1 US Goldies, Futurists and SSI-borgs cannot enter this fab competition, even though every one else in the world can.

2 Closing date for the compo is Friday 9 October because, well, it's a fun kind of day, really.

3 The editor's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into regarding this competition.

4 Go West - pick up pen – use pen to write winning entry.



PHOENIX



SALES 0532-311932

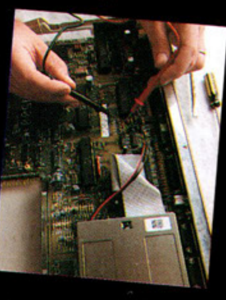
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AMIGA 600



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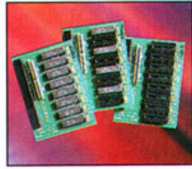
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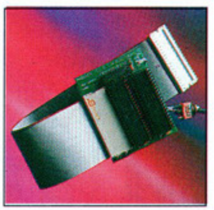
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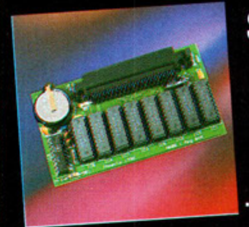
TRAIL BLAZERS-WHAT'S NEW IN SEPTEMBER 1992!

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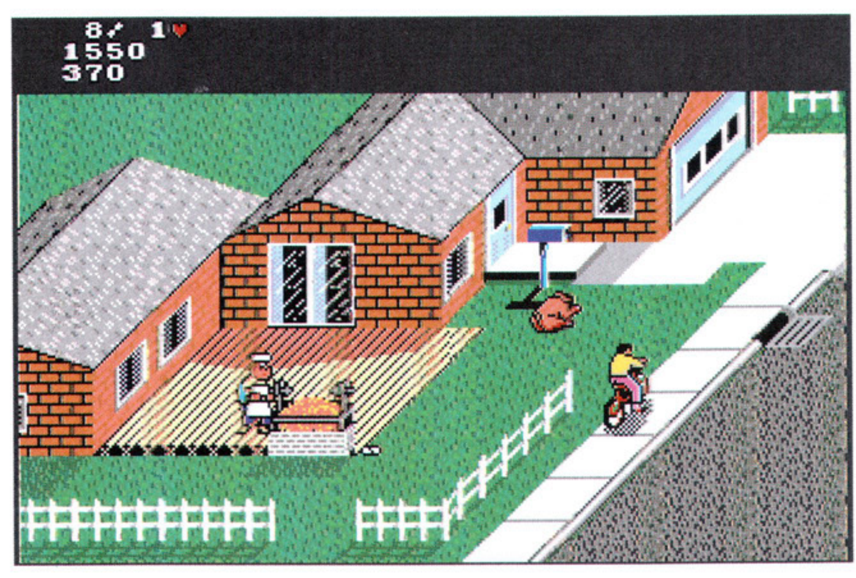


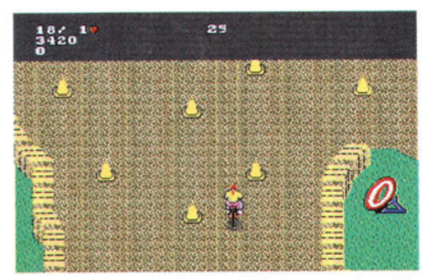



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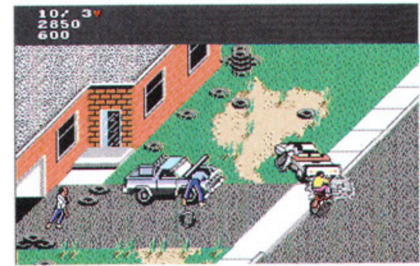
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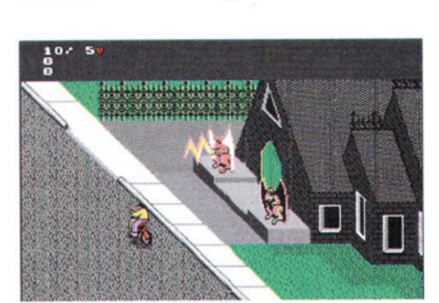
Things start getting surreal when the roasting pig you've just nutted with a paper runs off. Is it wild? Is it weird? Is it crazy? Nope.

Call this a stunt track? Possibly the meaning of "stunt" has changed from "dangerous and exciting feat" to "riding off ramps a bit," but we think not.





For some reason the bloke at number 2177 has a habit of rolling his tyre collection across the road into number 2198's garden. Odd..



Just an average everyday street, with an average everyday graveyard, and, er, average everyday gargoyles that spit fire at you.

Paperboy 2

It's a little-known fact that most of society's problems today stem from the fact that nearly everyone was made to do a paper round when they were younger. You see, the resentment everyone felt at having to do the equivalent of five years' hard labour for something like 20p every week still festers inside us all, causing us to be the irrational stress-laden go-getters we are today.

But, hey, that's my problem. Why do Mindscape think that anyone in their right mind is going to buy a game about someone who delivers papers? That's just what *Paperboy 2* is about.

Always the sun

Picture a street, preferably in isometric 3D. Along that street are a number of subscribers' houses, the people who want the paper delivered every day. Bombing along the street is the paperboy – you – dishing out papers, as is his wont. The basic idea is to wang the papers into the postboxes of the subscribers, while trying to break the windows of the houses that haven't seen the light of the *Daily Sun*.

Of course, there are the usual hazards you might find on any urban street: other cyclists, cars, dogs, people with lawnmowers, blokes throwing tyres about, roasting pigs, ghosts, and cannons. There are two ways to deal with these. The first is to avoid them. The second is not to avoid them and to end up in a crumpled heap on the floor. Actually, there's a third way that works with most obstacles, which is to throw a paper at them. This seems to stop them dead in their tracks. (The *Daily Sun* is obviously printed on lead-lined paper.)

Telegraph road

This rigmarole goes on until you either lose all your lives (due to the pigs and so on) or deprive enough subscribers of their rag. After each street is successfully negotiated there's a stunt track for you to leap about on and pick up some bonus points in, points scoring being, after survivng to another level, the aim.

Now of course it would be scandalous if *Paperboy 2* turned out to be little more than a repeat of the first game, a not-very-taxing dodge'n'weave exercise. It is, though. If that weren't enough, it's the worst-programmed dodge'n'weave game you've ever seen.

Mirror in the bathroom

The graphics chug by and tend to convulse down the screen rather than scroll; this isn't helped by the constant disk access while the game loads in a new bit of scenery, so that, just before a big event like a jump, the entire game stops dead for half a second. Very realistic. The music is the most godawful racket since Throbbing Gristle's heyday, although the samples aren't bad. But worst of all, the gameplay just has no appeal whatsoever – it's not challenging, it's not fun, it's not even laughable, it's just dire.

Paperboy 2 is a dismal failure on all counts. You'd have more fun doing the real thing rather than play this. Almost.

Ed Ricketts



What a brilliant scam! The meat van just happens to run paperboys over and they just happen to mysteriously disappear. Well, for a while – at least until Fatty Amal's Kebab Emporium needs more supplies.

PAPERBOY 2 – BUT WHY?

If you're, how shall we put it more, a more mature games-player, you might just recall the original *Paperboy.* As far as we know it never appeared on the Amiga, but surfaced on the 8-bits around 1986, as a conversion from the coin-op. The plot revolved around... well... a paperboy, really, and the trials and tribulations he faced on his daily round. The idea was to throw papers at houses that subscribed, avoid the many obstacles and break the windows of the houses that didn't take the paper. Might sound a tad familiar if you've read this review.

You'd be hard pushed to find anyone who really enjoyed *Paperboy,* let alone anyone who'd call it a classic. It just wasn't one of those games that had any character – or interest – or flair. Quite why Mindscape have decided to put out a virtually identical sequel remains one of those bizarre marketing decisions that only software houses can justify.

Paperboy 2
Mindscape ■ £25.99

- The graphics are slow, small, unappealing and they scroll jerkily.
- Reasonable samples make up in part for the ridiculously terrible music.
- Hardly any difference in gameplay or execution from the first game.
- Constant disk access means the game often stops completely without warning.
- Mindless gameplay is about as challenging as sitting down, just.



44%



In the Surrealists FC vs Cubists United game, the referee's decision was made pretty tricky when a striker played the penalty spot instead of the ball...

Striker Manager

D & H Games ■ £9.99

Yet another footy game, but a management game like *Player Manager* rather than an arcadey action type one. The game is protected with a dongle (which doesn't fit on to a 2000) plugged into a joystick port, which is always annoying.

You start off by choosing which league you want to play in. There are 16 European leagues, from France to Spain, and after choosing one you are presented with the main menu where you can buy and sell players, look at fixtures, and do other typical managerial-type things.

After having built up your super squad, it is time to play that game, and see if your little people can make you happy. This part of the game can be quite amusing because you get to see all the scoring chances.

It's quite fun to play, at least initially, but it's not the type of game you feel compelled to load up again and continue your career in. There are now better and more detailed management games. At least the price has been dropped, from £24.99 to £9.99. **Asam Ahmad**

Verdict 62%



Ten all and a minute to go with Charles 'Charlie' Charles, captain of Arsenal, waiting on the wing... it's almost as though the ball was glued to his feet!

Liverpool

Grandslam ■ £25.99

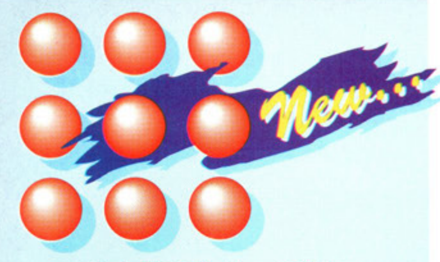
So, at last, the greatest footy team in Britain has lent its name to a game. What a pity that it doesn't reflect the quality of the real thing. The game shows a view from just above the pitch, facing one goal area, and the 3-D effect works rather well. The control system is a little lame, though, making it rather difficult to control the ball on the first touch.

The players move about in a rather slippery fashion, which gives the game a *Subbuteo* feel, and when you do get the ball it's ludicrously easy to score. This is partly due to the fact that you can't see the goal until the ball has been kicked – making it impossible for the goalie to save it.

Don't get me wrong, this is far from the worst football game on the Amiga. It's got good, fast graphics, and a number of options including two-player and FA Cup. But it has bugs that interfere with the game and when it comes to gameplay, it faces competition like *Kick Off* and, unfortunately, it isn't in the same league. **Andy Nuttall**



45%



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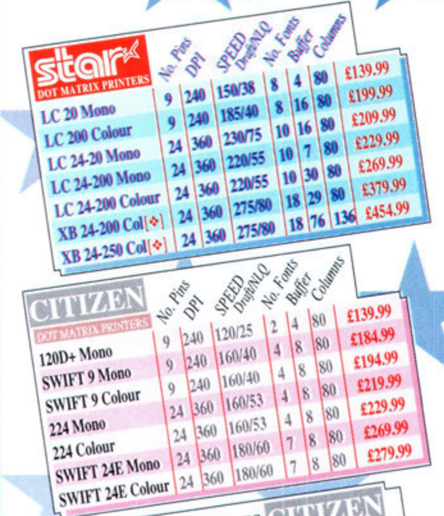
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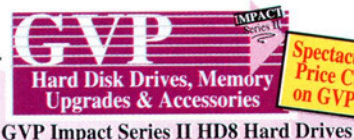
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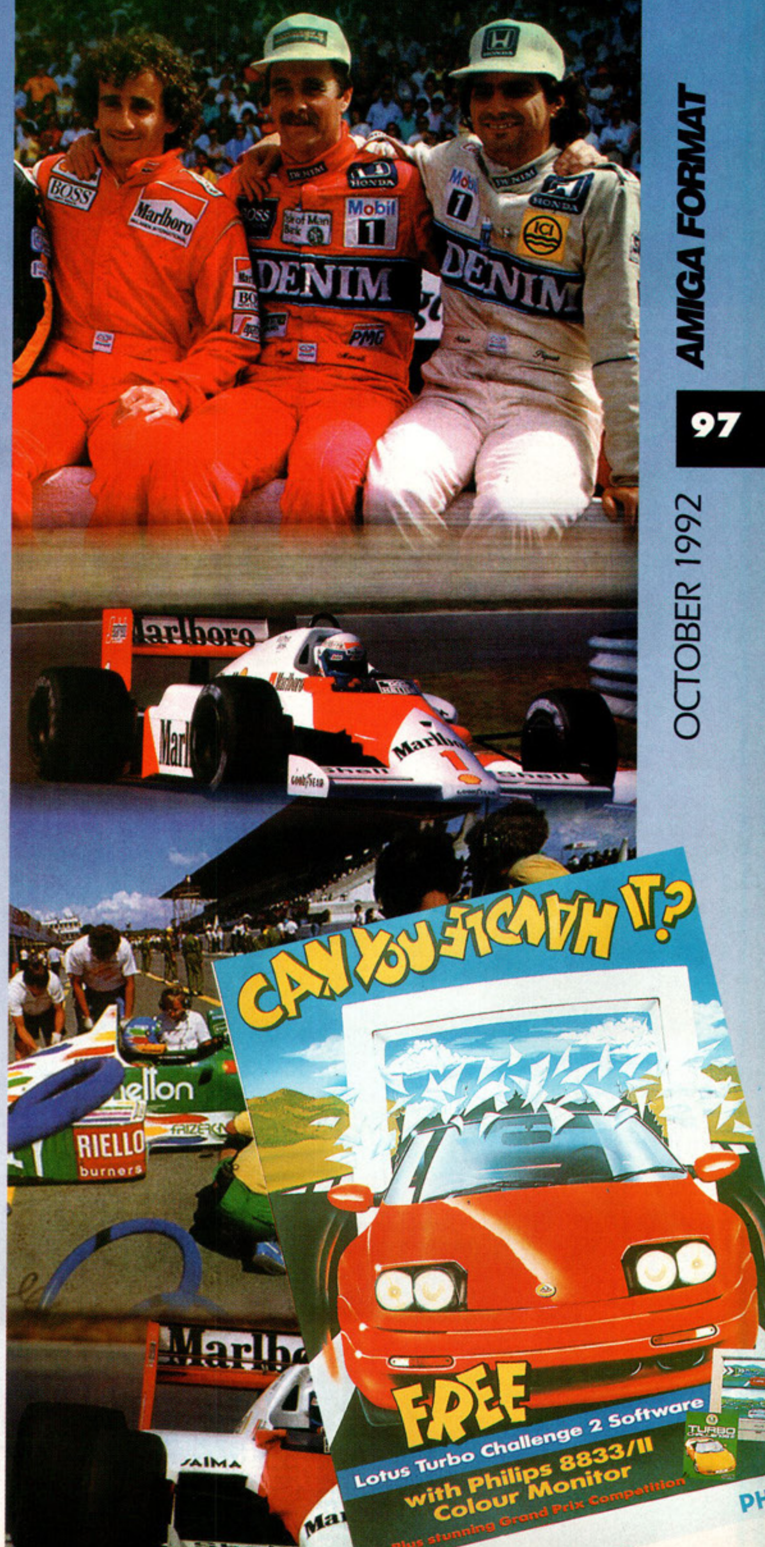
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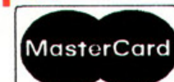
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Rumour has it that the earth was just a big accident, caused by an even bigger bang. But could you make something better in just seven days?



In low resolution, only one window at a time can be seen, which makes it trickier to keep abreast of the changing state of your planet. The Aquarium world is dominated by water, which radically affects the challenge you face trying to keep the environment in equilibrium and your planet alive.

Sim Earth

After a long, long wait, *Sim Earth* has finally arrived for the Amiga. Touted as the next best thing to being a divine intelligence, *Sim Earth* has something of a reputation – but so do most Maxis programs.

This reputation isn't necessarily always good, though. Often the 'Maxis problem' is that of slowly updating screens, mice which don't react for what feels like days, and a slightly detached, mildly irrational feeling that you're not really involved with what seems to be going on. Sound familiar? It was certainly the case with *Sim Ant* (especially in high-res mode) and even *Sim City* had a few, shall we say, user interface idiosyncrasies.

Sim Earth suffers from the same jerky mouse, the 10-second window updates and all the other signs that indicate a thrice-converted program struggling to cope in a new environment. It's a shame because *Sim Earth* is a wonderful excursion from the usual 'mutton-dressed-up-as-shoot-em-ups' we seem to get served all the time.

Two for the money

On the bright side, at least *Sim Earth* does come in a variety of forms, so perhaps you can extricate the best from two worlds. The high resolution version is flickery on a standard Amiga monitor and it needs a couple of megabytes of RAM (or more!) to work – but what do you expect? The display is really detailed and it's possible to have several windows open at once, displaying a multitude of facts about your own personal planet.

The low-resolution version works on all one-meg machines, and is faster. However, each low-res *Sim Earth* window (and there are many, ranging from world maps to life-form graphs) takes up a whole screen, which means that you have to spend a long time switching between windows.

In either case *Sim Earth* is much more playable from hard drive. From floppy it can occasionally seem like the game's given up and gone to sleep. Usually, just as you're about to do the same, a window will sputter into life and you'll realise there are still things to do. It's not an ideal situation by any means, and you regularly find yourself wishing you had several megabytes and a go-faster accelerator to help you along.





The end is nigh

Assuming that you haven't already been put off, you may be wondering what, if anything, *Sim Earth* actually has to offer. If you can put up with a few long waits, you'll soon discover that *Sim Earth* is full of charm, variety and intrigue, and it provides a long, solid chunk of entertainment and enlightenment.

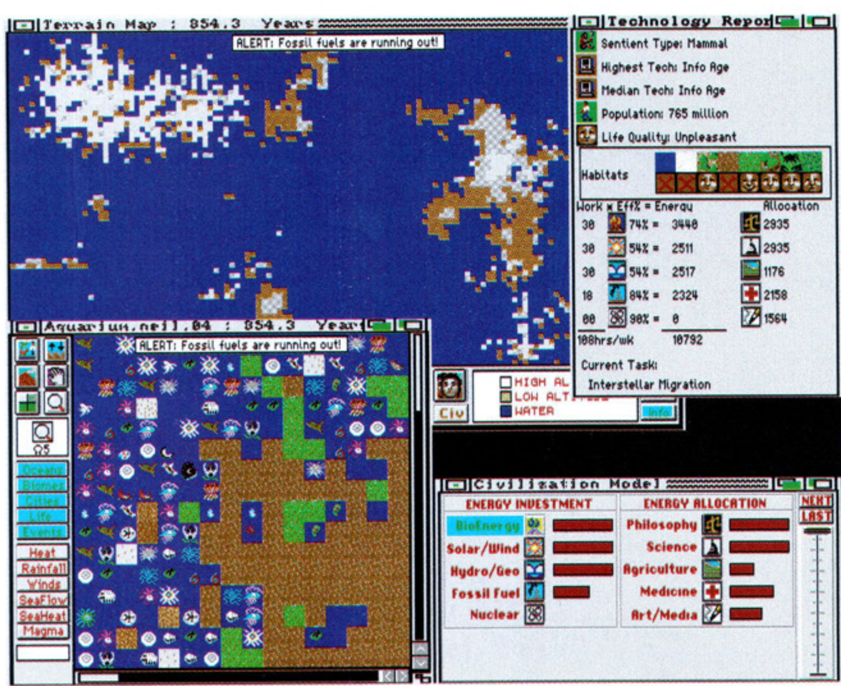
Essentially, the concept behind the challenge is not the confrontation that other games feature, but nurture. In a way it's like *Sim City,* though of course you have to look after an entire planet rather than just a town. But the level of complexity involved is so much greater that this ends up as much more of an educational simulator than a game.

There are so many things which can influence a complex structure like a planet – many things you've probably never even heard of, let alone understood – and they all work against each other to the point of madness.

A session with *Sim Earth* will have you wondering if it's ever going to be possible for us humans to live together harmoniously without nuking the bits off each other or poisoning the place with pollutants. It's an eye-opener, without doubt, but often a depressing one. Crafting and sculpting a hospitable, life-



The purpose of *Sim Earth* is very much education as well as entertainment, so it's vital to understand the scientific concepts involved at every stage.



High-resolution is really where it's at, but you need around 2Mb of RAM to make it work. Even then, the screen updates are slow, and mouse control can get extremely jerky.



If you can't work things out for yourself then *Sim Earth* provides a Gaia Window to give you a quick world's-eye view of the overall situation. Things are looking a little on the sad side here.

supporting planet from a charred lump of space-rock or a ball of damp gas is not easy work. Most of the time you'll be fiddling with the knobs and switches in a vain attempt to cause a positive effect. More often than not, you won't have a clue what's going to happen several domino-effects down the line. Sure, you know that if you increase the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere then life-forms will be able to breathe, but you probably won't expect to then see them all fried in the huge forest fires that burst out as the oxygen level increases. The manual doesn't really hammer the point home. There are lots (and lots) of topics explained – but in a roundabout way, without actually explaining the long-term effects they'll have on your precious planet.

"It has you wondering if it's ever going to be possible for humans to live together harmoniously without nuking the bits off each other"

The bright side of life

In most cases, when you finally get some life-form to become sentient, you'll find that they turn into evil warring, polluting, destructive nasties who are their own worst enemies. 'Civilisation' reports complain that their lifestyle is bad or miserable, and that they're working 108-hour weeks; but reducing the workload only causes the game to warn you that Science (or some other researchable development) needs more energy.

Light entertainment is provided when odd candidates for sentience suddenly develop into rational-thinking beings: jellyfish, for instance, are not usually found at the top of the food chain, but *Sim Earth* occasionally evolves species like these into tool-using, hard-working brain-boxes who like to go to work on the local bus, and love to visit shoe shops on Saturday mornings.

Despite the problems it has with its less than Amiga-sympathetic conversion, *Sim Earth* is fun: you can spend hours and hours tinkering with your new planets, each one having its own special flavour and vital differences which make playing the game a refreshing experience each time.

It's not quite so involving as, say, *Civilization* from MicroProse, because your long-term control is not direct – merely influential. You may not grow to love your creations quite so much, but your planet's security is paramount. And perhaps that's the secret of bigger things than *Sim Earth* – a good few politicians would change their blinkered viewpoints if they could see just how inconsequential we all are in the face of global catastrophes. End of sermon – buy it and save the world. Twice nightly. **Neil Jackson**

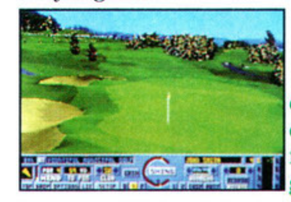
Sim Earth
Maxis/Ocean ■ £39.99

- **A hugely educational, yet entertaining, 'edutaintment' experience.**
- **Unfortunately it suffers from 'conversion-itis' in the speed department.**
- **Guaranteed to interest and involve you for hours and hours.**
- **A difficult but rewarding challenge.**
- **Recommended for global corporation bosses and politicians.**

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **79%**













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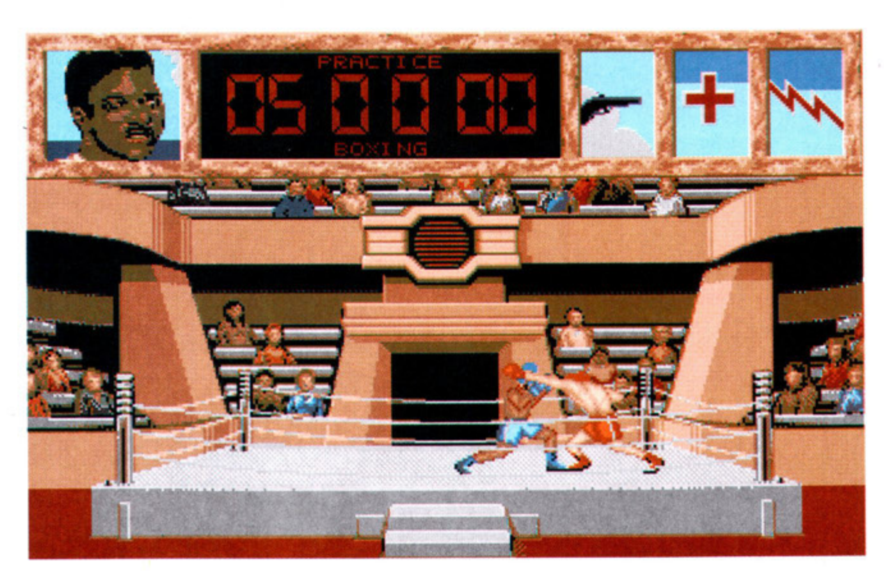
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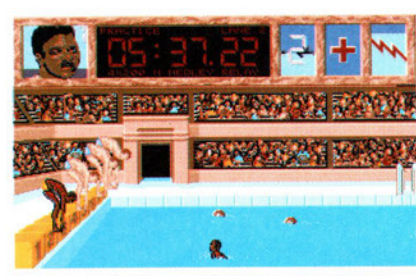
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"Hey ugly! look behind you, it's a flying fridge."
"What... where?"
"A huge flying fridge, up there..."
Thump! Zock! Smash!
"..ha, fooled you."



Look at all those exquisitely drawn people in the audience. Absolutely stunning graphics.

Espana The Games '92

The Olympic Games are over for another four years, and once again we (Great Britain that is, and Eire for that matter) came way down in the league table of medal winners. If you think you can do better than the British team, now's your chance with Ocean's contribution to Olympic fever.

There are more than 30 separate events (disappointingly, it doesn't include synchronised swimming), and you get to choose which country to represent as you compete with the computer for those vital medals.

The biggest portion of the game is the management section where you take a team of 12 athletes to the Olympic Village a fortnight before the opening ceremony. In these two weeks you have to get your motley crew to peak condition by setting training regimes for each contestant, along with making every member of the team practise each of their chosen events at least once a day. So, day in, day out, you take the same people through the same routines: first it's off to the medical room (it's a pity that there's no 'take steroids – then deny it' option). You can implement the doctor's recommendations in the gym, then take the athletes into the stadium to practise the same events that you've got them to practise for the last two weeks.

When the day of the 24th finally arrives you would expect, at the very least, flash graphics at the opening ceremony, lots of flames and scantily clad dancers. No such luck, the big day comes along and you go on doing exactly the same as you did before: medical room, gym, then the arena to either compete or practise depending on the agenda for that day. This goes on until the closing ceremony, when all you get for your efforts is your country's name displayed on an ever so dull listing of who won which medals. Worth all the hassle, I don't think.

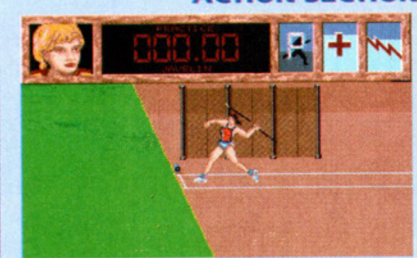
Just say no

If you don't fancy the idea of going through all the problems concerning your team's welfare, the Action section enables you to just go straight to joystick-waggling mode. The manual's explanation of different sporting techniques leaves a lot to be desired, as do the rest of the instructions. The Action Section of the game is the same as the practice sessions in the Management part; you are unable to compete in heats against the other countries.

Espana The Games '92 is only a single-player game. There is no option to test your skills against friends'; you can only compete against the computer. And the only indication of how well or how badly you are doing is how you compare with past Olympic records (all of which are listed in the compendious reference section). Sports simulations have been around much longer than the Amiga, and Ocean have made a brave attempt to leap out of the tired 'waggle your joystick as fast as you can' formula. Unfortunately *Espana The Games* happens to be the most tedious thing I've played in a very long time.

Clare Hodgson

ACTION SECTION

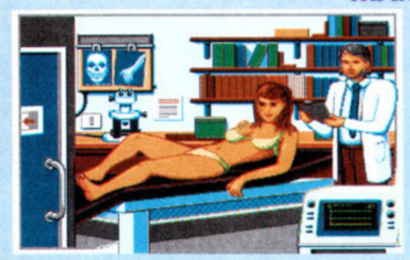


All of the events can either be controlled manually with a few waggles of the joy stick, or you can just sit and watch while the computer does the whole thing.

Entering the Action Section of the game enables you to control an athlete in any of the events, but only in practice mode. In action mode you are unable to actually compete in the Olympics themselves, or to practice against other players. If you want to run against anything but the clock, you have to enter the Management Section. (See below.)

NEEDS 1 MEG

MANAGEMENT SECTION



Don't you just bet that this is the way that Katrina Krabbe spends her time pre-race?



Physical jerks are what it's all about. And here we see a fine example of the breed. Just three hours training left.

The Management Section is the major part of the game. It enables you to train a team up to Olympic standard, starting from two weeks before the opening ceremony. In your office you will find a diary of all the events that will take place, a file on each of your athletes and a rather inefficient secretary. Push open the doors and either find yourself in the medical room, with your chosen athlete lying provocatively on the couch, or go to the gymnasium and force a member of your team to pump weights for up to three hours a day. And don't forget the 'highly amusing' click-ons around the office – there's nothing funnier than pens rattling in a desk tidy.

Espana The Games '92
Ocean ■ £29.99

- A sports management section as dull as *Championship Manager.*
- Poor documentation leaves you sitting on the side of the pool not knowing what to do next.
- Difficult-to-use waggling system, you're better off leaving the computer to control the athlete's performance.
- But if you do that, what is the point of playing the game at all?



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The Amiga 600 uses state-of-the-art surface mount technology, for maximum reliability and features a 3½" floppy disk drive, mouse, TV modulator and smart card slot all as standard. The innovative smart card slot accepts games, ROM or RAM cards (from 1Mb up to 4Mb) and will take advantage of many future new developments. The very latest version of the operating system, Kickstart/Workbench v2.05 is used in the Amiga 600 and its enhanced chip set facilities include improved graphics resolution, increased genlock support and the facility for up to 2Mb of chip memory. The Amiga 600 is fully compatible with the A670 CD-ROM Drive and Interface which will give it access to a full range of CDTV titles and audio CDs.The Amiga 600 is available from Silica in several configurations (see below) including a specially upgraded 2Mb RAM version.

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Sword of Honour

Haiiiiiya! Take that, dishonourable samurai san. You take my sword, I take your life. It's the way of the warrior, so who am I to argue? I either get my sword back or I've got to kill myself. When it's a choice between beating a few lily-livered ninjas to a pulp and slitting my own throat, it's easy to decide whose blood is going to be cascading down the oriental pathways.

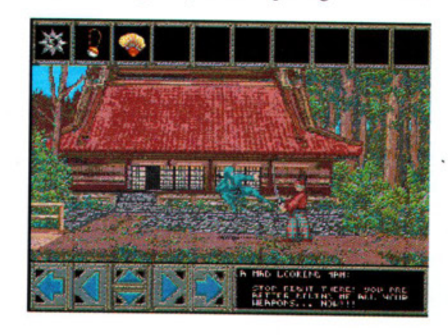
That's about as much background as you need in *Sword of Honour*. The eastern hokus pokus tries to give some meaning to the adventure, but really it's just another excuse to put a Bruce Lee fight-alike through his paces. Your warrior wanders round the paths, past pulchritudinous backdrops, beating some people, bribing others and collecting miniature statues of Buddha from monks. Then it's on to the castle to tackle Damion, the East's most devious miscreant, and he's a notorious sword-snatcher to boot.



This warrior looks too tough to tangle with, but give him a fan and he lets you pass. Unfortunately he's forgotten your kindness the next time you see him.

Budding game?

The game boils down to being a beautiful beat-em-up that requires only a low level of intelligence to progress from one level to the next. Objects have to be collected during your travels – you wouldn't believe how untidy the Japanese countryside is – and then plied on the appropriate person. Most are used to persuade enemies to give you safe passage from one screen to the next, but to get the Buddha statues, you have to find the right object to give to the right monk.



An early encounter with a scarlet-clad enemy. Hit him hard, hit him harder. And if he doesn't drop, hit him harder still.

Weapons can be collected to supplement the power of your samurai's fists of fury, but it's surprising how many times you have to slash enemies with your huge ninja sword before they lie down and die. You might as well threaten them with a potato peeler for all the damage it does. But when a warrior comes at you with an over-grown chopstick, your character crumples to the floor after the first couple of blows. There is no justice. A gruesome ball-and-chain type weapon adds some welcome ferocity to the proceedings – you can fling it straight into your opponent's face – but generally the game's too tame and too lame.

Sword of stone

It's all very simple. *Sword of Honour* is an OK beat-em-up, but this sort of game has been done many times before and this one doesn't break any new ground. Sure, the backdrops look stunning, but the animation's not particularly special, the storyline's inconsequential and you find yourself hankering for something more – a new twist to the routine of hack-and-slash, a decent puzzle to solve (one that's really going to test your intelligence), some humour, something unexpected. Something that means I'm not going to have to wander up and down beating ninja warriors for the rest of my oriental days.

Bruce Lee die-hards will lap up the game's martial machinations, but by now games should have progressed beyond the usual beat, hack and slash-em-up. Something along the lines of Jackie Chan meets Cynthia Rothrock would go down a treat. A beat-em-up with more class, more style, more substance, more humour, more everything.

Neil Jackson

COME OUT FIGHTING

Plenty of moves are available to the budding ninja. Here's a choice selection.



PUNCH RIGHT
The most basic move, a swift smack in the face.



CROUCH PUNCH
And a swift one to the goolies for good measure.



KICK JUMP RIGHT
Or how about a kick in the head? That'll do the trick.



KICK LOW RIGHT
A great move to use against enemies with sensitive toes.



CHAIN RIGHT
Whack 'em in the face with the chain. Nice lacerations.



ROLL
If you're on the receiving end, just roll out of the way.

Sword of Honour
Kingsoft/DMI ■ £25.99

- **Detailed backdrops give the game a real oriental flavour.**
- **Good range of enemy-mangling weapons.**
- **It's easy to control your warrior.**
- **A password feature would have lessened the game's repetitiveness.**
- **You get a terrible feeling that you've seen it all many times before.**



67%



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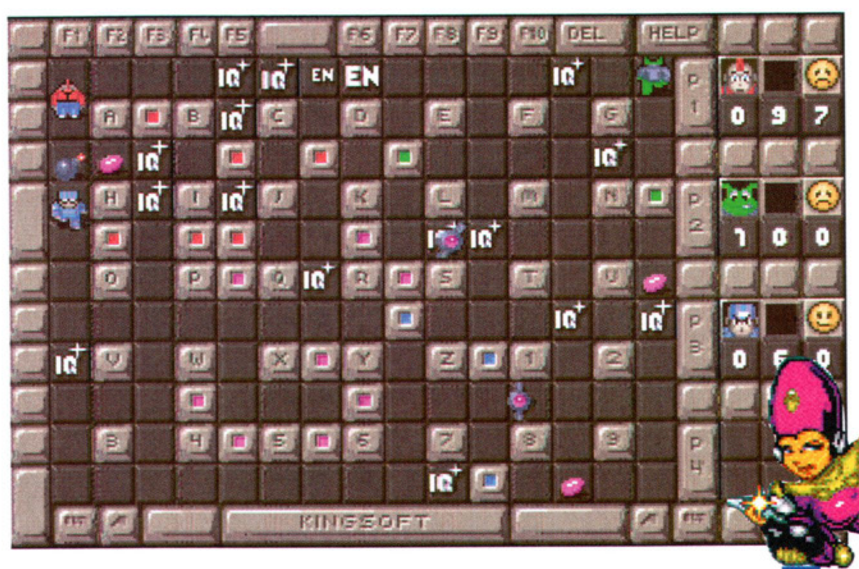
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Does four times the amount of players mean four times the amount of fun? Not necessarily; it really depends on just who you've decided to play against.

A shapely opponent, buggoid bomb in hand, welcomes you to the game.

The aim of the game is to destroy every purple nasty, preferably even before they've burst out of their eggs. Don't count your chickens (or aliens for that matter) and all that.

Bug Bomber

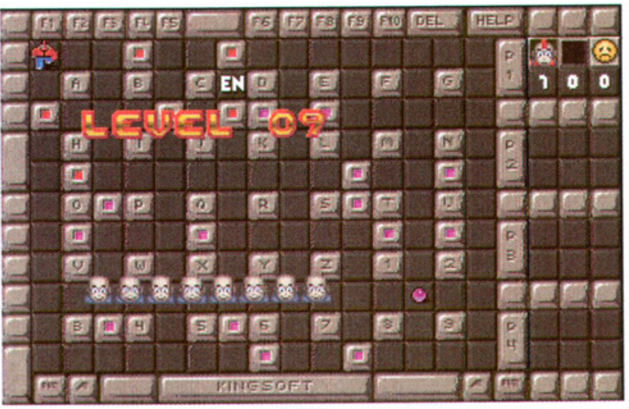
You've probably wondered what a computer bug looks like, but were afraid to ask. Well now's your chance to find out. *Bug Bomber* realistically depicts the inside of your Amiga. But what you didn't know is that cyberpunks are running around, laying eggs, planting bombs and mines to waste all those nasty little bugs. And if you don't believe me, ask our technical editor Pat. He told me, and he should know.

The scenario may be different but *Bug Bomber* is a more elaborate form of the great *Dynablaster*. You run around a maze of square blocks, some of which you can destroy, and try to outwit your opponent whether he be a computer player or a 'normal' human being. Up to four of you can play, the aim being to blast your opponents, and their hatchlings, to kingdom come.

Right royal variety

You have a variety of weapons on hand, from bombs to thunderbolts. The ultimate weapon, though, is the cyberbeing's ability to lay eggs of five different kinds. Depending on which way you jab the joystick, your little computer person will drop different things: up for a bomb, right for a thunderbolt and left rewards you with a mine.

To lay eggs, it's up to five downwards jabs depending on what you want to hatch out of that particular blob. This is a very fiddly way of doing things and can result in utter chaos when your opponent has got you trapped between hell and high water. But after a few games, once you're accustomed to the controls, the real fun of *Bug Bomber* comes shining through. Although it's not as manic as a five-player round of *Dynablaster*, four people crowded round an Amiga seriously working against each other is always a guaranteed source of amusement.



Nine lives left, and loads of nasties to dispose of, the EN pick-up will push up your energy level by 25 points, so go get it before it disappears.

Value for money is what you want and that's what *Bug Bomber* is all about, buy one game, get two free. The one-player game is a little repetitive (too much of a good thing?), but both of the multi-player modes are thoroughly enjoyable. Cooperation is the key to the first multi-player game – up to four of you can pool your resources to beat the ever powerful computer to pulp. The second multi-player jaunt is a trip to oblivion for all but one of the players. The most manic version of the game, it involves all the players trying to kill off everything but themselves and their offspring. For once with a 'cute' computer game, the sound isn't a hindrance. In fact, playing with the volume up is an advantage because you can hear the eggs hatching and know exactly what sort of weapons your opponents have laid down.

Energy loss

Running into an enemy or bombing yourself by mistake (it happens more often than you think) will cost energy points. Each player starts off with 100 points, different numbers of which will be lost depending on which baddy you encounter. Planting weapons and laying eggs costs energy too, but you gain extra points by picking up EN bonuses or collecting the energy left when an Energy egg hatches. There are also IQ bonuses scattered around the screen, which give your hatchlings greater intelligence and enable them to make estimated rather than totally random moves. (I really do wish that someone would give some to Timmy Mallet).

All the options and the different weapons are wholly confusing at first, but perseverance pays off eventually and you're left with a fun game that can entertain a whole family at once. At first it doesn't seem to have the same addictive hook as that of *Dynablaster* – the complicated controls take the edge off it – but *Bug Bomber* will grow on you. Give it a second chance and it will impress.

Clare Hodgson

ENERGY POINTS THE WAY

BLOCK



Laying a block takes only one unit of energy. Most of your enemies cannot pass through blocks, but nor can you, so be careful, you might end up trapping yourself.

BOMB



Dropping a bomb takes one unit of energy from your score. These only have a range of two squares, so place them with care and don't leave yourself with nowhere to run.

MINE



Placing a mine uses up three units of your precious energy. Once placed, it will detonate if one of your enemies moves on to the square it occupies.

EGG



Laying an egg takes from four to twenty units of energy. There are five different types of egg, including Painters, Crunchers and Hunters, each with their own attributes.

Bug Bomber
DMI Design ■ £25.99

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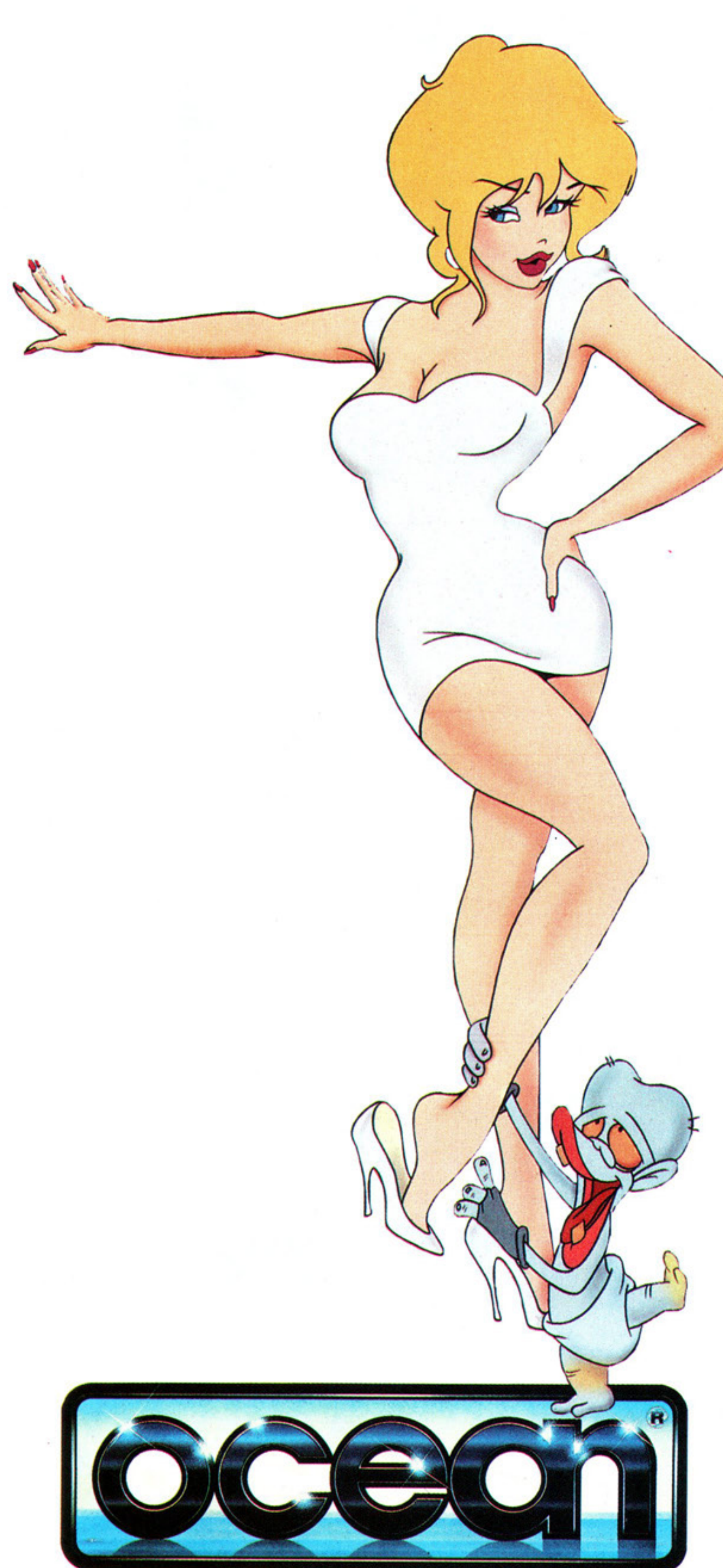
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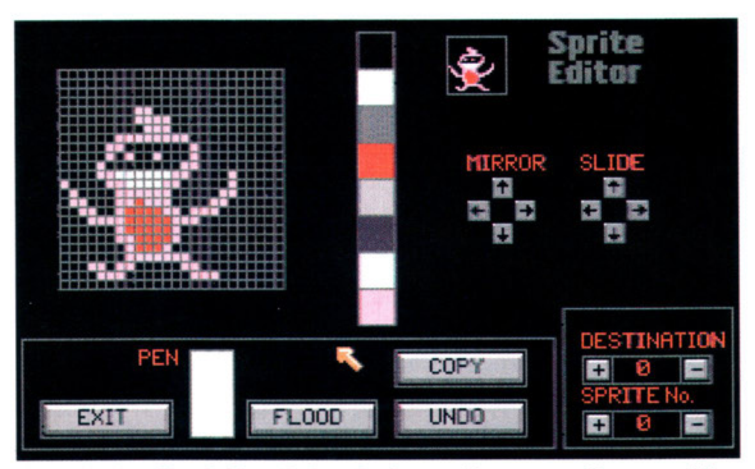
... AND SHE WILL





Once again, fate has drawn you to these pages. Succumb to the will of James Leach as he takes you on the trip of a lifetime through the uncharted region that *is* budget software.

Cheap 'n' Cheerful



The production of laughably pathetic sprites is no problem once you become au fait with *SEUCK*. But sooner or later you'll have to explain why they're so rubbish.

Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit

GBH ■ £9.99

Don't just sit there wondering how arcade games are written; look it up in a book. And, if you can't be bothered with that, buy the *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit*. This gives you everything you need (including a small but well-written manual) to write an arcade game yourself.

Oh, sure, it'll be instantly recognisable as a *SEUCK* game, but it'll be yours, right down to the sprite design. *SEUCK* has been designed with the layperson in mind, it is mouse-driven and, despite the inherent complexities of game design, it is easy to use. Anyone who is prepared to think about it can write a decent blaster using the *Kit*. It's a brilliant program and must have launched many a coder into 'real' programming.





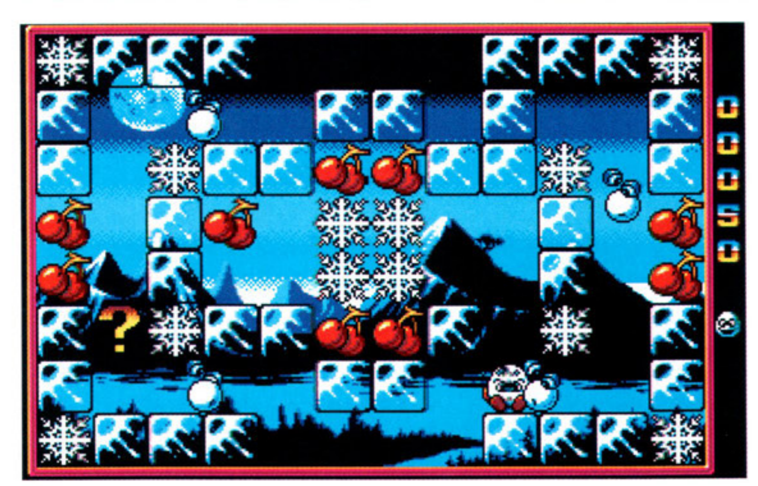
OK men, no clawing, spitting, resorting to napalm or tactical nuclear weapons when my back's turned. And remember – this is war, so my decision is final.

Operation Combat

Action 16 ■ £7.99

Heavy armour and artillery are yours to command in this entertaining little romp through a modern battlefield-level conflict. You move your forces around a map in true wargame style, massing them where your enemy doesn't expect, then chickening out until he attacks you. There's a lot of detail to handle, but the game interface itself is pretty simple, so you can launch in without too much angst. Once you do start causing the enemy trouble, don't expect fireworks. This is a pretty straight-faced program. You can play it through a modem link to enable you to humiliate someone beyond your line of sight, too. It's quick, it's detailed, it's a lot of fun. Buy it, link up with an Amiga-owning general, and get fighting.

Verdict 79%



All the elements you've ever wanted in a game; ice, eggs, cherries and snowballs.

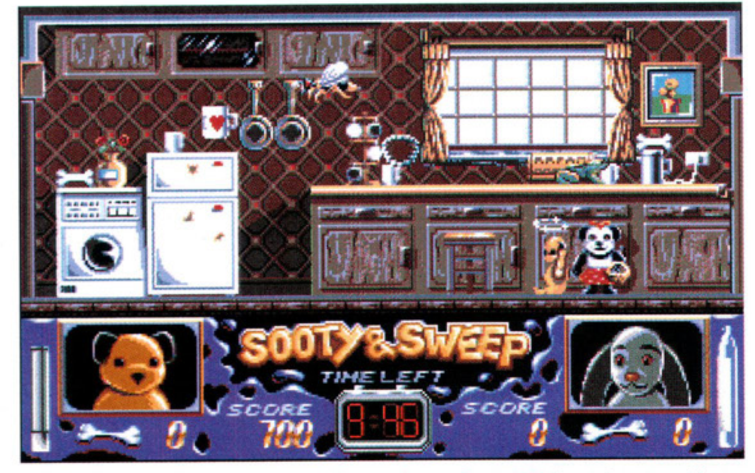
Kwik Snax

CodeMasters ■ £7.99

Crivvens! The *Dizzy* family has been banished to lots of vaguely unpleasant places! And you're the only person who can save them. Although you patently don't care, you might know of some youngsters who are into *Dizzy*. The bright, cartoon-style graphics, the easy-to-read storylines and the general egginess of it all is just right for the tots.

And there are four variants of the game here, each involving a different ovoid character. It's like a sort of updated *PacMan*. There are obvious collectables to grab, blocks to push around and nasties to avoid. It really is fine fare for the little 'uns.

Verdict 80%



Psycho-Soo, mad and in full effect – a karate-chop to Sooty's 3rd vertebra stuns him.

Sooty and Sweep

Alternative ■ £7.99

In this game you get to play the little bear in his quest to explore a large house. Soo the panda, his main squeeze, accompanies him as he deals with all manner of possessed domestic items. The graphics have a curious sepia-tinted look to them, which contrasts with the cartoon-feel of most children's games. But this doesn't detract from the game. There is an easy mode and a hard mode, but the game is eminently playable on either, especially if you're hard. The only criticism is that the sprites may be a bit small for a kids' game. Bold colours and massive objects are usually the order of the day. Still, not a bad game, and one with lots of detail on each screen.



Erik

Atlantis ■ £7.99



Mindless of the danger, Erik leaps in front of a pesky bubble. Luckily, he can fire crossbow bolts from his midriff.

You're a little knight. You've had your worst knightmares confirmed; yes, you're inside a computer game. And, horror of horrors, it's a platform game. Time to escape, you might think. And you wouldn't be wrong. That'll do for plot, as It's completely and utterly wrong, but the real one isn't much better. *Erik* is simply a platform game. You must fire crossbow bolts (or something like them) at the bubbles which get in your way, as well as leaping from platform to, erm, ...what was it? Never mind. It's a pretty cute game, marred only by the rather distant feel of the character.

This is quite important because the chap must be positioned perfectly for many of the jumps. It's one of those annoying pixel-perfect jobs, and when you get it slightly wrong you will curse and howl like Peter Cushing in that film on telly the other day. The sound effects are good, though. So good that you turn the volume up. Then you turn it back down again because you're getting annoyed with not being allowed even the smallest leeway when hurling yourself around the levels.

Buy *Erik* if you're a smartass and reckon all platform games are dead easy.

Verdict 67%

Narco Police

GHB ■ £7.99



Typical. You wait to ambush a drug dealer for ages, then four appear at once. It's a veritable festival of carnage.

In the future, everyone's on drugs. Nasty, evil drugs that relax you and make you want to love everybody without actually getting up from the chair you're lying in. Got to be stopped, this. So you (as a dead hard cop, with several other cops) decide to wander down into a tunnel network. You all split up and walk down the rather jerky 3D passages. As you shuffle along, people jump out and open fire at you. Presumably they've got something to do with all the drug-taking, so being a decent, but hard, law-enforcement type, you fire back.

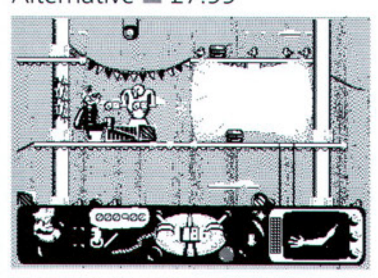
And that's it, sort of. It's a game of reactions, rapid joystick movements and falling over in corridors. Nothing if not original. The trouble is, it's not all that exciting. Sure, there are thousands of yards of inter-connecting tunnels to clear. There are weird things to discover and arms caches to exploit. There are billions of scuzzy dudes to waste and there are other cops to link up with. They still don't give the game a great deal of excitement though.

But *Narco Police* is competently done (apart from being jerky). If you are salivating at the thought, don't let me stop you getting it.



Popeye 2

Alternative ■ £7.99



Our hero gets punched by a weird mutated alien thing, possibly a goon. It helps to be familiar with the Popeye cartoon.

"Ug, ug, ug." No, dear old Popeye doesn't transfer well to the printed page. Never mind. He transfers pretty well to the Amiga, though. This is a platform game which sees our (mutated, I can't help thinking) hero scrambling over various themed levels such as building sites and jungles. It's tougher than the *Dizzy* games, and there isn't the same feel of friendliness to it as you will find with the eggoid one. But the graphics are clear and bright and what you see is what you get, really.

Each level sets you the task of climbing to the top, avoiding everything that falls on you and jumping over other dangerous objects. Once you get high enough, you get to meet one of Popeye's classic enemies (Bluto or the Goons, usually) At this point, or rather, these points – there are many of them – Popeye must do his violent spinach-related thing under your expert guidance.

It's bright, cheerful fun of the non-adult variety. Limited in scope, but if you're a two-year-old kid you're probably not intelligent enough to realise that yet.



Falcon

Action 16 ■ £14.99



"Extinguish tabs and belt up, ladies and gents, this 'un's going to make all our eyes water." Landing the F-16 isn't usually as traumatic as this. It's possible to put it down with the minimum of fuss with the help of air traffic control.

What we have here is one of the classic flight sims of all time. It's fast, it's devilishly complicated and it's a whole lot of fun. There is all the air-combat you could wish to handle, plus loads of things on the ground to fly close to and frighten.

With the game you get an impressively stodgy manual and a keyboard chart with an immense number of controls on it. This is not a get-in-and-fly job. But when you do get it airborne, you can't fail to be impressed by the smoothness, the speed and the accuracy. And you can even buy two copies and play head-to-head with an Amiga-owning friend of your choice.

You save your pilot as you play through the missions, until you end up taking on much of the Warsaw Pact in a deadly cat-and-mouse game of, er, *Falcon*, really. It's a brilliant simulator, and one that arguably gets closer to the original aircraft than any other sim on the Amiga. So get out and buy it.

Amiga Format Gold 90%

Falcon Mission Disk: Operation Counterstrike

Action 16 ■ £9.99



Hunting at low level for ground targets gets satisfying when you come across a peaceful little factory, erase it entirely and get home for tea before the enemy has even realised what has happened.

If you've hacked and slashed your way through the original *Falcon* missions, why not slot in 12 more? You get a new scenario with *Operation Counterstrike*.

The emphasis is rather more on destroying land sites than shooting down enemy aircraft. The map contains an unfeasible amount of poorly defended industries. Yep, you get to go in against a load of factories. It's precision bombing against a warehouse the size of Anglesey which means that no matter how bad you are, you can't miss.

Of course, the enemy tries to put up a defence, so there's air-to-air action, as well as ground-based mayhem. In fact, *Operation Counterstrike* has been designed specifically to utilise all the capabilities of the updated F-16C you'll be flying. And those capabilities are? A secret. Buy this Mission Disk and find out.

Verdict 80%

Falcon Mission Disk: Operation Firefight

Action ■ 16 £9.99



The F-16 C's ground attack capability is vital. In fact it's secondary only to the ability of the aircraft to be painted in cool tigerstripe colours and look dead hard in front of the kids at air shows.

'Bomb and dogfight your way through an enemy onslaught', it says on the adverts for this disk. Quite right too.

Here it's your pleasure to receive another 12 missions and another new map. This time you're embroiled in a seriously time-consuming war with what seems to be a well-equipped and highly militant Parish Council just over the other side of the mountain range.

Russian or Georgian or Latvian or whatever they are MiGs buzz around like moths, tanks crawl around like woodlice and, in the middle of it, you charge around like Rod Hull and Emu, spraying them with uranium-depleted death. It's a more hectic and challenging disk than *Operation Counterstrike*, but if you can handle yourself, you'll have an immense amount of missile-related fun.

Verdict 78%

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- **POWERFUL PICTURE EDITOR**
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- NEW **JOYSTICK HANDLER -**
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- **MUSIC SOUND TRACKER**
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- **AUTOFIRE MANAGER**
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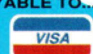
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Game Busters

What have we here? Could it be another fun-packed, full-bodied, frolicsome foray into the realms of the fantastic? Or could it just be a few pages of hints and tips? **Andy Nuttall** flips out…

Chartbusters

Put your pint down and listen here. You've got to read this bit or I'll come round your house and bore you profusely… Be warned: I know where you live.



Civilization

At the beginning of time, God said "Let there be light", and a couple of thousand years later, Tommy 'Bright Spark' Edison invented the light bulb. Now look at all the bother he's caused. Did he ever get any red 'leccie bills? Did he @#@#! But I digress… Here's the tip then. Press ALT and R to randomise the leaders' personalities.

In early versions, pressing SHIFT and 1234567890t gives you a complete world map so you can see into enemy cities. This feature was not included in later releases, but, hey! Give it a try, just in case!



Push-Over

"Eee. There's nowt I like better than a game o' dominoes down t' pub with old Alfie Noakes. But I couldn' give you any tips on dis 'ere new fangled wireless thingy. So I be leavin it to some young snotty little…" Yea, thanks, Grandad. So if you're stuck on a level of this most excellent of games, turn to the last page of Game Busters to find a list of all 100 codes!



Jaguar XJ220

Don't play it! Buy an anorak and a remote-controlled model car, and get yourself down to the race track on a Sunday. Don't be put off by the snig-gering and a-jeering, be proud to partake in the highly interesting *sport* of remote-control car racing. But if you insist on the Amiga version, then when you are told to start your engine at the beginning of a race, press the fire button on your joystick, and wait for the signal to go. Pressing P twice will skip to the end of the race, and you will have won!



The Secret of Monkey Island 2

Have a banana! Or have a top tip for that oh-so cuddly graphic adventure type thing. No wait! for tis a good one… If you turn to the next page you'll find the second and final part of our full solution to this superb adventure. Tiptastic, mate!



Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker

Enter Trick Shot mode, then press F7, F4 and F1 in succession (147 back-wards). When you hear a double click, press ESC and go to Demo mode - you will find an extra option there which instructs the computer to 147 breaks!

GRAHAM TAYLOR'S SOCCER CHALLENGE

A couple of people sent in replies to Joe West and Steven Bates' pleas for help in *Graham Taylor's Soccer Challenge*, but they were pipped to the post by the designer of the game, Neil Adamson. He sent in the following hints and tips for all you budding Brian Cloughs out there…



Wasn't he once a disabled detective? Never knew he had a football for a head, though…

TRAINING

For optimum results, train four times a week, and use team training as often as possible. Select your training method carefully as each programme will have different effects on your players' skills; for example Circuit Training for stamina, Outdoor Game for overall skills/set piece practice, and Indoor Game for passing.

Avoid prolonged use of any single method, as this can reduce player morale and may also lead to injury. In June you may give your players a break, but resume training in July.

TRANSFERS

Before getting a player on loan it's wise to know how good he is, as even a player from a higher division may have lower skills than most of your own squad. Find an available player first and, when asked how many weeks you require him for, enter a very high figure. This should abort the loan, and then enable you to send out a scout to have the player watched. Compare his skills with those of your own players and, if suitable go and borrow him.

When placing players on the transfer list, try not to price them too highly, or you may scare off other clubs. Examine a player's value from the Contracts screen and use a figure similar to this. Remember either to send a scout, or watch a player in action before purchasing to avoid wasting valuable cash. As (or if!) you climb the leagues, think about getting rid of as many of your old players as you can, this enables you to replace them with newies with skills to match their opponents. Remember, one good player is more valuable than two average ones.

The best type of player to go for first is a really good goalkeeper. When in Division 3 try to save up £100,000-plus for your goalie, and this will solve half of your problems. It's possible to make money by giving a full contract to a trainee (only select the very best), and then putting him straight on the transfer list. Give him time though, and his skills will blossom so you can sell him for a higher price.

OTHER TIPS

When picking your team, if necessary use players out of position rather than opting for a trainee to fill a gap (goalkeeper excepted). Watch as many of your matches as you can, because the results will be more of a realistic reflection of your team selections and players' skills.

Choose your words carefully when it comes to team talk. Generally, try to use the responses 'praise', 'no comment' and 'reprimand' whenever necessary. Remember to check your players' contracts and re-negotiate with valued players regularly. A player out of contract may choose to walk out on your club and you will not receive full value for him in compensation.

When seeking a new job (or just starting) try to select a club that attracts large crowds, as realistic ground capacities are included in the game. As a guide when starting out go for Burnley, Carlisle or Cardiff - avoid Doncaster, Halifax and Torquay at all costs!



Monkey Island 2 Parts II, III & IV £50

This game has caused a real storm in all areas of the computer games industry, and has set a standard for graphical adventures which will be difficult to beat. To all you adventurers out there who have taken Guybrush through puzzle after puzzle, only to find yourself stuck on a particularly nasty problem, here's the rest of the solution to help you out.

DID YOU SPOT our deliberate errors last month? Well, you may have found that Captain Kate isn't there when you want to charter a ship! This is because she is in jail – so go and set her free. While you're there, get the vanilla envelope from the shelf, and open it to reveal some 'near-grog'. If you managed to work through to the end, then congratulations are in order – but you will probably have noticed that even more work is necessary in order to get the second piece of map. If you haven't worked it out yet, here's the rest of the solution to help you out…

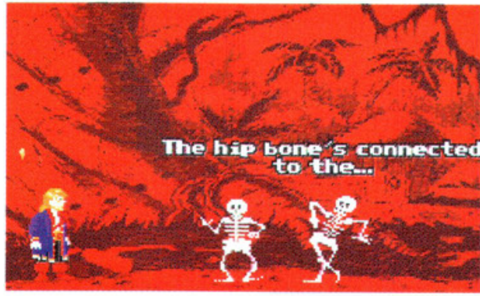
Right, where did we get to? Oh yes, just as you were reeling in the map, the thieving seagull pinched it and flew away to Big Tree. Well, what are you waiting for? Follow it!



"That hut looks a bit small. I'd bang my head on the ceiling all the time in there. Oh, it's perspective, I see."

Part II: Big Tree

Once you're there, get the plank that is sticking out of the tree, and use it on the hole in the far left of the trunk. Use the oar on the hole next to it, then walk on to the big root just to the left. Climb on to the oar via the plank, and… oh no, disaster strikes! Guybrush falls and hits his head. Will he survive? Tune in next week for the next thrilling episode. Now, back to the story.



"Wait a minute, who's this band? They're rubbish. Haven't you got any Hawkwind or Marillion?"

You'll be relieved to know that he isn't dead, but unconscious (which isn't quite as serious). He's far away in slumberland dreaming of a song, and writing down the words on the spit-encrusted paper. When he wakes up, pick up the broken oar and head for Woodtick, where Woody (the carpenter) will fix the oar (if you ask him nicely). Return to Big Tree, climb on to the plank again, then use the newly fixed oar in the hole to the right. Walk on to that, then pick up the plank and use it in the next hole along. Keep on in this way until Guybrush takes over and climbs to the top.



Guybrush arrives at the mysterious tree-top huts. Who lives there? Where do they come from? Why? How?

Walk to the small hut and pick up the telescope. Go to the bigger hut in the middle of the screen, and use the dog to sniff the pile of maps - he will pick out the second piece of map! Two down, two to go; it's a game of two halves; half time and the trainer comes on with a lemon (probably *Epic*) and other such great footballing cliches. What, this isn't football? Dang.



With a cry of "Alakazam!" Guybrush produces a small animal from his jacket. Paul Daniels, eat your wig.

Go back to Dread's ship, and set sail for Phatt Island. When you arrive there, go towards the waterfall and climb up until you reach a pump. Using the monkey on the pump will stop the water flowing, and will also reveal a secret about the waterfall.

Now walk to the bottom, enter the 'newly discovered gaping hole' and keep going until you reach a beach. Go to the cottage at the top of the screen, open the window on the left (you'll find out why later) then walk through the door.



Around about this time I like to balance a telescope on a statue while wearing a silly palmtree hat.

Inside you'll find Captain Rum – talk to him for a while, then challenge him to a fight. He will back down but will challenge you to a grog-drinking contest instead. He will provide the grog (the strong stuff) which you should throw into the nearest tree and replace with some (low-alcohol) near-grog. Sit down, and when Rum comes back drink the near-grog and wait for him to pass out (this is what grog does for you, kids – don't try it).



"You've been overdosing on Special K and Maltesers again haven't you, Norman?... Norman?"

When he's unconscious put the mirror in the frame, then go outside and use the telescope on the grotesque statue. A ray of light will bounce off the mirror and focus on a brick in the wall (cue a song) – take note of which brick it is. After you've picked the telescope up, go inside, pick up the mirror then push the selected brick. You should then fall into the cellar, where you'll find a skeleton with the third piece of map. Pick it up, go left through the hole and back to the main island.

Head for the cemetery on Scabb Island, look at all the tombs and go into Stan's crypt. (What do you mean it's locked? Use the crypt key!) Look at the book of quota-



Phwoa!, it's a scene from *The Lost Boys*, but where's the Val-Kilmongous Jim Morrison poster?

tions, and memorise the one by Rapp Scallion. Looking at all the tombs will reveal an epitaph that matches one of the quotes. Open it up and take some of the ashes from inside. Remember the Voodoo Lady's shack? Did you look on the shelves? Can you guess what you have to do now? Yes that's right, go back to the shack in the swamp (remember to close the tomb first), and try to get the ASH-2-LIFE™ potion bottle. Talk to the Voodoo Lady, then give her the book (*Joy of Hex*) and the ashes. She will give you some real ASH-2-LIFE™ in return.



The sun's gone down and it's time to go find some virgins. Problem is they're none too common these days.

Go back and use it on Rapp's ashes, then watch him change from a pile of dust to a living, breathing, er, weenie cook. (*We interrupt these Secret of Monkey Island 2 tips (again) for another interesting fact: The technical term for Rapp's, er, alteration, is 'polymorphic tweening' or 'morphing' for short. Although most examples of this technique look good, this one is particularly impressive*). Offer to turn the gas off back at the Weenie Hut (on the beach where you started), and he will give you the key to it.



Are you coming paddling or are you just going to sit there toasting marshmallows all night?

Go back to the beach, and use the key on the door (the Weenie Hut is behind Bart and Fink). Go inside and use one of the stove knobs to turn off the gas. Return to the tomb, use the potion on Rapp again, then tell him that you've turned off the gas. He will eventually give you the fourth piece of map (Yippeeee!). Close the tomb and the crypt, then go and see Wally (the cartographer) in Woodtick. Give him the model lighthouse lens and all four map pieces, then ask him (very nicely of course) to draw you up a new map.

This he will do, as long as you promise to get a love potion from the Voodoo Lady. Go to her and get one, but… Alas! she will sense that Wally is in trouble. Go back to Wally's, look at the writing on the table, then go back to the swamp and open the Juju bag. Open the crate, then use it. Guybrush will then be taken to LeChuck's fortress by some delivery men. Right! On to Part III!



Hang on a minute. A skull skewered by two swords? I only wanted to borrow a cup of sugar.

Part III: LeChuck's Fortress

When Guybrush gets out of the crate, head right and go through the door at the top of the stairs. Now walk right and keep going until you reach a dungeon. Walk to the left cell and talk to Wally. Now look at the spit-encrusted piece of paper that holds the words to the song from the dream sequence. Get some paper and write down the first three bodily parts of each verse in the given order (eg Verse 1 = Head, Hip, Leg etc).



Modern Art! I just can't understand it, give me a nice picture of a bowl of flowers any day.

Go back the way you came and, if you pass a sculpture in the wall with the body bits in the order of Verse 1 (eg Head at the top, Hip in the middle and Legs at the bottom - see screen), push it, and walk through the gap. If you don't find a matching one by the time you reach the sign posts, go down the back tunnel and keep looking. Once you've found one, do the same for the second and subsequent verses. In the end, you will reach a big door with several locks on it. Push the middle of the door and go through the doggy flap.



"I might as well tell you now Wally, it was me who nicked your bike"

The key to Wally's cell is on the wall next to LeChuck's throne, so pick it up. LeChuck will capture you and leave you hanging around with Wally. Drink some of the green drink, and spit at the pan below you to move it slightly. Then spit at the shield to the right of Guybrush and it should bounce off several things and put out the candle (if not, keep on trying). You will now escape and find yourself in the dark, so use a match from the Juju bag and leave quietly (tee hee).



Dinky is a high-gravity island which is inhabited solely by people less than four feet tall. (*What? – Ed*).

Part IV: Dinky Island

Once you arrive, walk right to the man and talk to him. If you want, ask him about philosophy then go through all the colours available (there are a plenty of them!) to discover a pointless fact about Zen existentialism (not that there is such a thing, unless JP Sartre fibbed lots).



You know what they say: "A watched still never boils. Dash it! I'm going down the pub, you watch it Polly."

Open the barrel, pick up the cracker and give it to the parrot. Remember the directions he gives you. Go up to the still (the big shiny machine), pick up the Martini glass that's on the ground and fill it with sea-water. If you now use the water on the still, it will distil the water (remove the salt from it). Pick up the crowbar and the bottle from the sea, then go left and into the jungle. Take the left path at the fork and follow it until you reach a tree with a bag hanging from its branch. Use the bottle on the tree trunk then use the broken bottle on the bag. Pick up its contents (a packet of instant-cracker mix), look at it then use it with the water in the Martini glass to make two more crackers. Go back the way you came until you reach the fork.



"I wonder what's in the box. I think I'll buy a copy of *Amiga Format* and read Game Busters to find out!"

Continued overleaf



Follow the other path and you should reach a pond (by the way – try wandering further until you come across a call box – use it, just for a laugh). Remove the rope from the top of the box, then open the box using the crowbar. Take the dynamite, then use the crowbar with the rope to form a makeshift grappling hook. Follow the directions that the parrot gave you, then give the parrot another cracker and follow his new directions. At the next point, give the parrot your last cracker and the directions will then take you to a big X.



I don't know what it is, but I find it hard to believe that nobody's noticed it before!

Use the shovel on it then use the match on the dynamite. Then use the lighted dynamite on the hole. Once it has blown open, enter the chamber and use the grappling hook on the frayed metal bars around the hole.

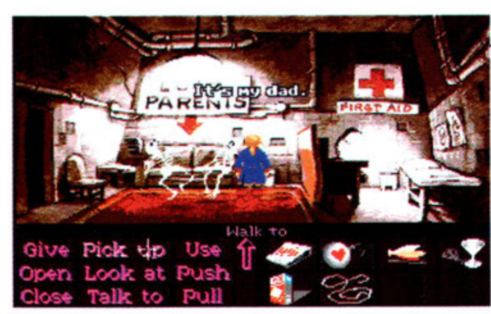
It's around about this time that you should get the feeling of déjà vu! (You'll know what I mean when you get there.) It's around about this time where you should get the feeling of déjà-vu! (Crap joke.)

Now you're in darkness, click on the USE button then scan the screen for a light switch. You will find yourself in a small network of corridors, similar to those in LeChuck's Fort… Wait a minute… Aaaaaarghh!! And other pirating expressions!! It's the dread pirate, LeChuck!!

Even though the idea holds no appeal, you must talk to him for a while, and he will begin stabbing a voodoo doll of Guybrush. He will then transport Guy to a different part of the complex. Walk around and have a look at the various rooms (LeChuck will keep looking for you and zapping you around from time to time). When you find a room with lots of boxes, open the nearest ones and take a balloon, a Kewpie doll and a bottle of root beer.



"Let's just say I call it 'Mr. Thingy'." Our hero prepares to take the particle accelerator ride to Hell.



"There, there, I said. Ointment, that's what you need, and you'll grow a new epidermis before you know it!"

When you find the first-aid room, examine your dad's remains and take his skull. Put it and the Kewpie doll into the Juju bag, thus making the beginnings of a voodoo doll of LeChuck (the 'one from the dead' in this case is the skull).

Go to the right of the screen, open the medical drawer and take out the syringe, then open the bin to the right and take out the gloves that you find there. Now go and find the room which holds helium tank, and use the balloon and both surgical gloves on it.



"Oh, God! It smells like you've been wearing these trousers for a hundred years! Oh, you have? Right..."

Pull the coin return on the grog machine and a coin will fall out and roll on to the floor. When LeChuck comes in, he will pick up the coin. At this moment, try to pick up LeChuck and you will rip off his underwear ('one from the thread'). Give him the handkerchief and he will blow his nose ('one from the body').

After he zaps you, make your way to the service elevator, press the button, and get in. (The lift will only carry 900 pounds in weight, but luckily the helium filled things in your inventory make you lighter).

Wait until LeChuck arrives before pulling the lever, the doors will then close and trap a bit of his beard. When the lift eventually stops, make sure to pick up the beard ('one from the head') and then exit the lift to see a familiar scene to original *Monkey Island* adventurers.



"Elevator going up! First floor, pirate haberdashery and surgical appliances. Second floor, er, beards. I think."

Put the other three relevant bits in the bag, then Guybrush will make a voodoo doll of LeChuck. Go back down in the lift, use the lever again, and exit it. Wait for LeChuck to arrive and then use the hypodermic needle on the new voodoo doll.

Right, that's where the *Amiga Format* Hint-O-Matic™ is closing down. You've almost cornered LeChuck but we're leaving you to work the rest out for yourself. Rest assured, whatever you do you will always come to the ending, and WHAT an ending…

Well that's it, after all these months of sleepless nights and toilsome days, huddled slavishly over your Amiga, you've done it! Now it's time to go OUTSIDE, and have a real life; frolic in the fields, talk to girls. You're on the dawn of a whole new adventure, it's called The Real World.

Solution by Andrei Mendis

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2	01536	23	14342	44	29726	65	17023		
3	01024	24	10246	45	30238	66	18047		
4	03072	25	10758	46	29214	67	17535		
5	03584	26	11782	47	28702	68	19583	85	32511
6	02560	27	11270	48	20510	69	20095	86	31487
7	02048	28	09222	49	21022	70	19071	87	30975
8	06144	29	09734	50	22046	71	18559	88	26879
9	06656	30	08718	51	21534	72	22655	89	27647
10	07680	31	08206	52	23582	73	23167	90	28671
11	07168	32	24590	53	24094	74	24191	91	28159
12	05122	33	25102	54	23070	75	23679	92	26111
13	05634	34	26126	55	22558	76	21631	93	26623
14	04610	35	25614	56	18494	77	22143	94	25599
15	04098	36	27662	57	19006	78	21247	95	25087
16	12290	37	28174	58	20030	79	20735	96	08703
17	12802	38	27150	59	19518	80	28927	97	09215
18	13826	39	26638	60	17470	81	29439	98	10239
19	13314	40	30734	61	17982	82	30463	99	09727
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Gordon Harwood Computers
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Dear Sirs,

Hello! I am writing this letter using "Pen Pal". Normally I do not correspond with computer companies, but this time I had to make an exception.

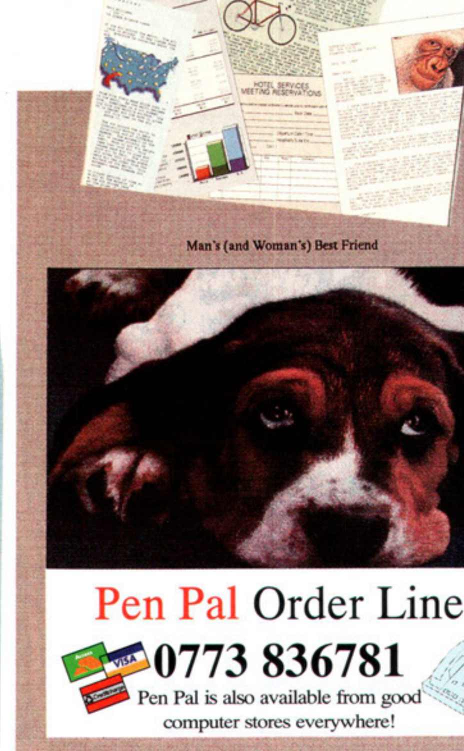
I have been looking for a program that I could use to create colourful letters, useful forms, and effective business graphics. I have purchased several Amiga word processors whose ads made great claims as to their capabilities. After using these programs, however, I found that the ads were only hype! I soon began to feel that no program would do what I wanted to do.

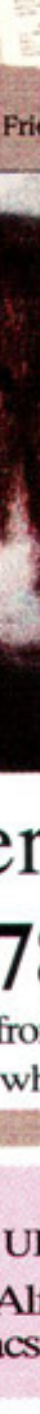
Recently I saw your program "Pen Pal" on my dealer's shelf. According to the package I thought that I might finally be in luck. Although I purchased the program I was afraid that in reality it would not do everything the package said it would do. As soon as I got home from the computer store I fired up the program on my computer. Without even reading the manual I was soon creating documents with colour and pictures. As you can see from this letter, I have become pretty good at your program's graphic capabilities.

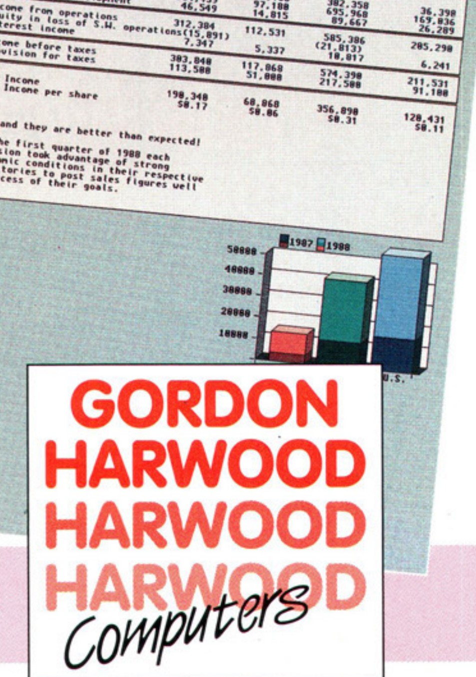
One pleasant surprise I had was to discover that Pen Pal has a built in database manager. I find that I use this database almost as much as the word processor. I have entered my Christmas mailing list, video tape library, and cooking recipes in as databases. When I send Christmas cards this year I will use Pen Pal to print the mailing labels. I am designing my own Christmas cards in Pen Pal including some pictures I drew in a paint program. I plan to use Pen Pal's mail-merge feature to merge my mailing list names with the card to make each one personalised.

Thank you for making this program available.

Mr. Richard Goodwin







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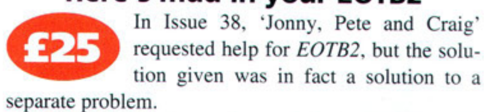
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Helping Hand

Defender of the weak, saviour of the helpless, liberator of the feeble, vanquisher of the nibble-pibblies – YES! It's that time of the month again! Time for (loud drum roll) Helpiiiing Haaaand!

Here's mud in your EOTB2



In Issue 38, 'Jonny, Pete and Craig' requested help for *EOTB2*, but the solution given was in fact a solution to a separate problem.

The teleportation section and the 3x3 room mentioned were not on the Margoyle level, but on the sleeping quarters level of Darkmoon. In order to escape this, place all three gems which you find there into one of the four compartments in the walls. This will reveal one of four secret rooms corresponding to N, S, E and W. Save the game at this point in order to try out all the rooms, as it isn't really possible to visit them all (and stay sane). Beware, though, the eastern path may contain a trap!

To escape, use the mauve-coloured TROPELET seed in the soft earth of the teleportation room, and this will take you back to where you started.

D. Boffey
Long Eaton

Can't say fairer than that. Have a small bag of monies (or in this case a £25 voucher).

My head is spinning

Can you help me on *Magic Land Dizzy*? I think I know what I have to do, but unfortunately I keep running out of lives, and so I can only do bits of the game at a time.

Is there a cheat for extra, or infinite lives, please, and would it work on the other *Dizzy* games (as I have all of them)?

Craig Hunt
Stonydelph, Tamworth

Ask and ye shall receive! Start the game, and anywhere, type DIAMONDS AND PEARLS (including spaces), then unpause the game by pressing P. You will then find yourself with infinite lives. Thanks to Matthew Old of Bodmin for that one.

By Hook or by crook?

How on earth do I get the pirate uniform in *Hook*? Also, I can't get on the ship. Please help.

Lee Emerson
Loughton, Essex

I'm completely and utterly stuck in *Hook*! I can't seem to get more than two coins from Dr Chop. Can you help me?

Zeeshan Khan
Slough



Peter Pan, big girl's blouse *extraordinaire*, looks the other way as a couple of nubile young girlies swim by.

Indeed we can, young sirs. This time Alyn Hughes of Liverpool comes to the rescue! To get the jacket, use the grappling hook on top of the clock tower a couple of times, and then swing up to Mrs Smeedles' door (grabbing the pirate hat on the way). Knock on her door, then swing back, go straight back behind Pirate Square and use the washing line pole on the jacket. If it doesn't work first time, try again!

Now get two gold pieces from Dr Chop (by letting him have your two gold teeth), examine the jacket for the third, then take the roller blind. Go to the pub, talk to Fake Jake, then give the three mugs and coins to the barman. Give the three cups of cocoa to Jake, and he will fall asleep allowing you to remove his trousers (strange game, this!).

Go behind Pirate Square and, using the roller blind, get changed into a pirate. You should now be able to board the ship!

Fractal obituaries

In Helping Hand (Issue 32), Sylvester had some problems in *Deuteros*. Well, here are some tips to help him.

To prevent Methanoid attacks within a solar system, first capture or destroy all Methanoid orbital factories in that system, then construct an incomplete factory on the outermost planet. The evil Methanoids will then be unable to launch an attack anywhere in that system.

Scientists are unable to develop Alien Artifact beyond 12 percent because the artifact is only one part of a larger object which is scattered around the galaxy.

Pressing SHIFT and C on the Planet Resource screen gives infinite quantities of most objects (Ion drives etc) but not drones. This also allows whole orbital factories to be constructed from single pieces. To reset this, repeat the keypresses.

Darren Hemingway
Sheffield

Puff Stuff

Please could you help us? We are having trouble finding a solution to *Little Puff*. None of our friends can find a solution either, so we would be grateful for any cheats you can offer.

Charlotte, Oliver and Heather Doy
Norfolk

Well, I'm afraid that even the might of Helping Hand can't help with this problem. If any readers can offer any assistance, please write in to the address below.



Blimey! That's not much of a city. Three hospitals, a church, some factories but not a pub in sight!

Bright lights, Sim City

Do you have a cheat which gives unlimited money or any other hints for *Sim City*?

Stephen Hawkridge
Dunstable

Aha, a budding megalomaniac, I see. Well, here's a tip from Rob Crowe of Newcastle Upon Tyne. When you start a new city set the tax rate at 0 percent, so keeping the citizens happy and attracting people to the city.

In December put the tax rate up to 20 percent, then wait until the budget in January and put the tax back to 0 percent. You will then find that the citizens have paid the maximum amount of money possible without even realising! This makes even more people come, and you can make loads of money each year and still remain popular! Also, try holding down the SHIFT key and typing FUND during the game. This will give you an extra $10,000 to play with – don't do it too many times, though, as it will eventually bring on an earthquake!

That's it for another month. Keep the letters flooding in, and remember - we look at ALL tof them. Please don't ask for personal replies, though, as there is never time to answer letters in this way. Until September then, stay frosty!

If you're stuck on a particular game, or have a solution to a letter printed in the magazine, then write it down and send it in to us at **HELPING HAND** ***Amiga Format*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW**

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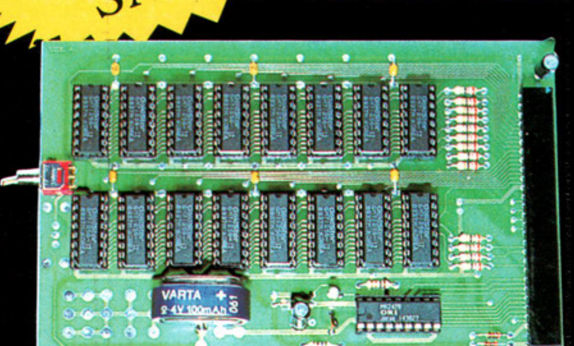
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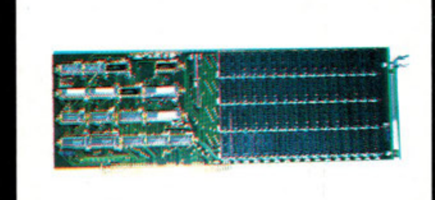
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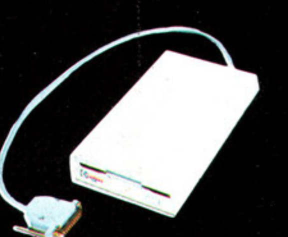
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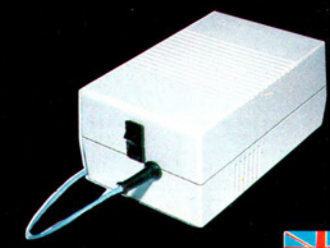


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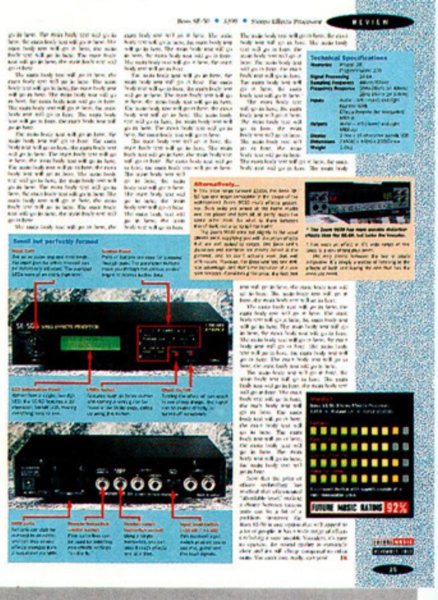
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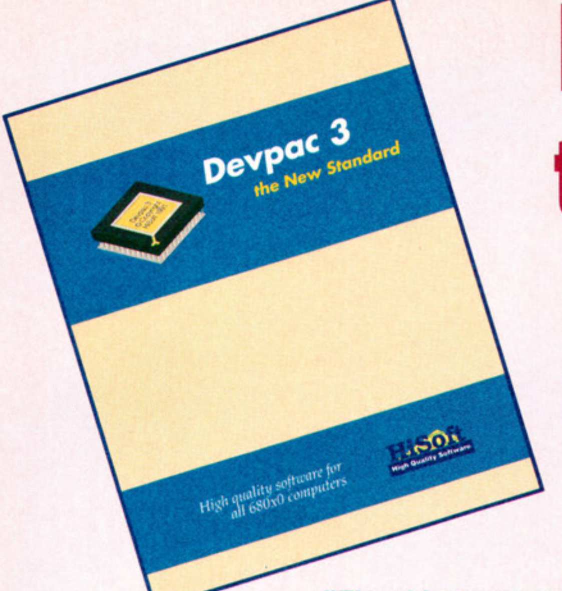
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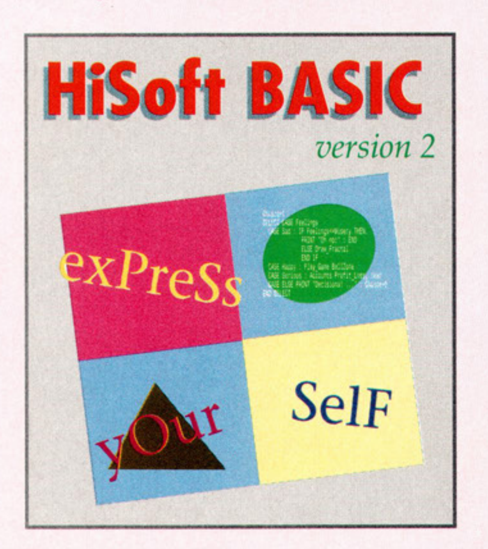


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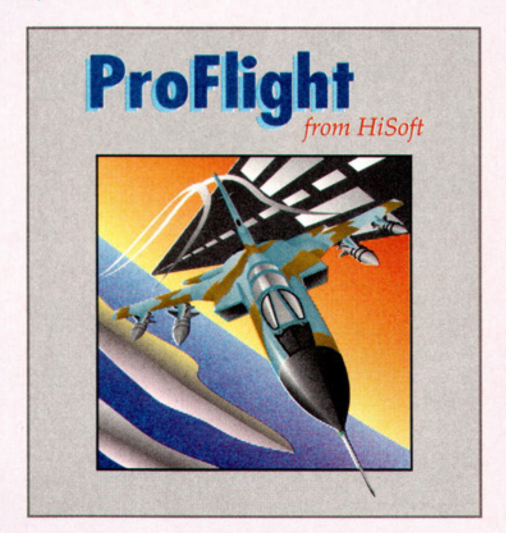
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E & OE

'Serious' reviews

This is the section of the magazine dedicated to bringing you honest and intelligent reviews of the latest 'serious' releases in hardware and software.

From expansions such as extra memory and hard drives through to useful, practical utilities to the latest in 'productivity' (DTP, databases) and 'creativity' (paint, animation, 3D, digitisers and music) software, it's all in here.

For two years running, *Amiga Format* has been voted by computer retailers as the magazine that they most trust when they're deciding what to stock, so you can see that we're the people best placed to advise you on what to buy. With our expert knowledge, we know what's the best program to date for any particular kind of job, and we'll see how anything new stacks up against the best in the business.

Contents

There's an astonishing mix of reviews on the menu this month, so prepare your tastebuds for a real delight.

How the Ratings System works

SPEED (marked out of 5) ●●●●●
Tremendously important for both hardware and software: there's nothing more annoying than waiting. A purely intuitive judgement.

DOCUMENTATION (out of 5) ●●●●●
Although there are some packages that are so simple no manual is needed, complex items benefit hugely from a good explanation.

ACCESSIBILITY (out of 5) ●●●●●
The target for all good software should be powerful but simple: this rating assesses how easy it is to get to grips with the item.

FEATURES (out of 5) ●●●●●
Does it do what you want it to do? How well does it do it? And does it also do lots of other things that you'd never have thought of?

VALUE (out of 5) ●●●●●
A pretty important rating, this one: if a package does everything you could wish for, it's no use to you unless you can afford to buy it.



Coming Contraptions

What's new for your Amiga on the serious scene? **Neil Jackson** previews the latest gizmos.

ALFA DATA RA5 A500 RAM BOARD

£139 GOLDEN IMAGE (UK) 081 365 1102

Alfa Data now make two different types of RAM upgrade for your A500, depending on the size of memory you require. The cheapest is the 2Mb kit, but there's also a 4Mb version available (£169).

Both boards fit into the trapdoor of your machine, and they're both fitted with battery-backed-up clocks running from rechargeable NiCads. Each kit comes with other boards which need to be plugged into the main board on your A500, so you will need to open the case.

POWER COMPUTING 2MB RAM EXPANSION

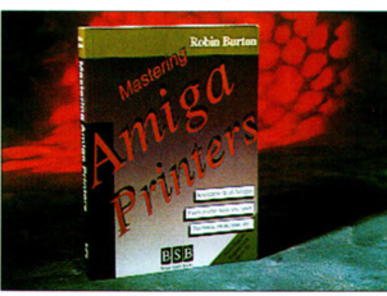
£99.95 POWER COMPUTING 0234 843388

Power Computing are now in the process of making three different types of RAM upgrade for the A500 and A500 Plus. The 2Mb expansion plugs into the left-hand Amiga expansion connector (the one under the little cover on the side – not the trapdoor underneath). This is available in a variety of different styles depending on your needs. One version is fitted with a through-port, enabling you to connect further devices in the left-hand port. You can buy the Power Computing RAM expansion configured with 8Mb RAM (£299).

Power Computing also make an internal RAM board which fits into the A500's trapdoor slot. This is also available in a variety of options: there's the PC501 0.5Mb board (£24) and the PC502 1.5Mb board (£49) which comes with a battery-backed-up clock.

MASTERING AMIGA PRINTERS BY ROBIN BURTON

£19.95 BRUCE SMITH BOOKS 0923 894355



Is your printer still giving you trouble? Can't get the darned thing to work no matter how hard you try? Then Robin Burton's new book could be just the thing you need to put an end to all the hassle. *Mastering Amiga Printers* covers everything you'll ever need to know about lasers, dot-matrixes and ink-jets. If you're looking for tips on the Workbench Preferences or you're planning to write a driver for that antiquated Caxton Model Ten you bought at the car boot sale, *Mastering Amiga Printers* is the best place to seek advice.

AMI BACK 2.0

£29.95 MOONLIGHTER SOFTWARE/SILICA 081-309 1111

AMI Back, the hard-disk backup program for the Amiga, has just been upgraded by American software manufacturers Moonlighter Software Developments. The new version includes complete support for all SCSI storage devices without requiring special driver software, a graphically displayed scheduler for making backups under automatic control and smart file compression which decides the best files to squash..

MSD have also just announced plans for *AMI Back Tools*, a suite of disk utilities designed for floppy and hard-drive use. It includes a disk-optimiser and a special recovery program for retrieving unintentionally deleted files. There are also functions for detecting corrupted files and files infected by viruses. A price for *AMI Back Tools* has yet to be announced, but it's likely to be similar to the price for *AMI Back*.

FREEFLIGHT STEERING WHEEL

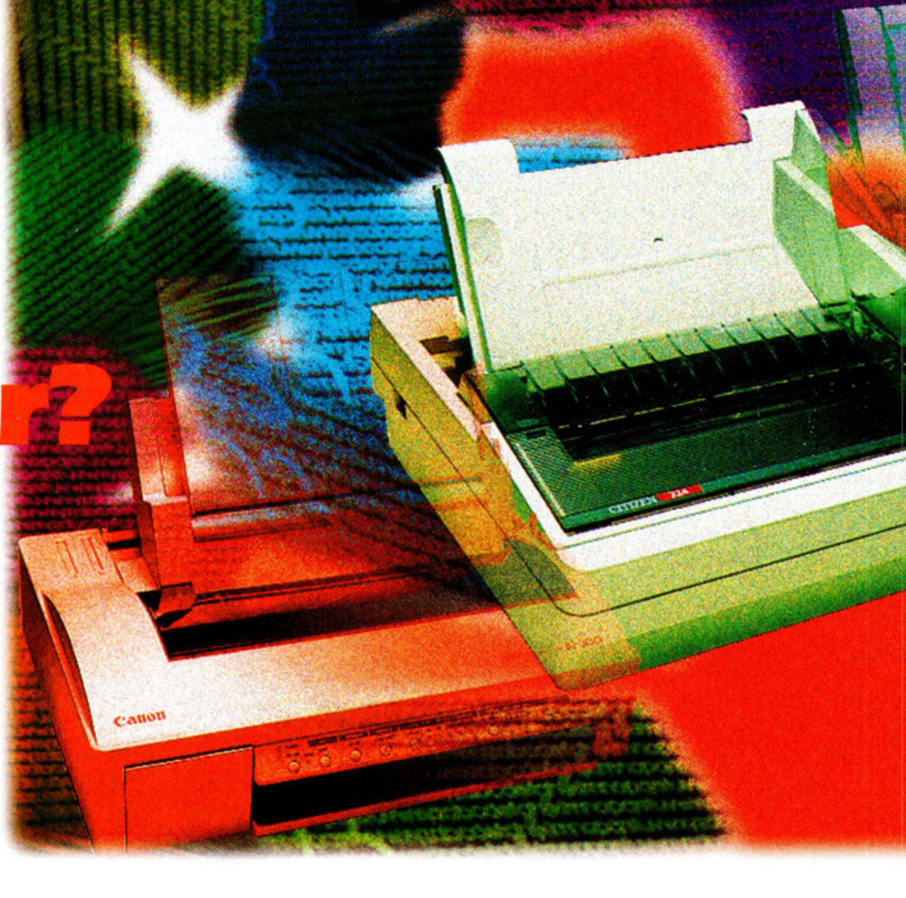
£29.95 RC SIMULATIONS 0272 550900

Get ready for the ride of your life. Hot news reaches us from those innovative chaps at RC Simulations, where they're working on the prototype designs for a stunning new control system for the Amiga. Soon you'll be able to play *Formula One Grand Prix* and other racing games using this amazing infra-red steering. It plugs into your machine like a normal joystick, but gives you control you never thought possible. Look out for an exclusive review of this incredible device in next month's *Amiga Format*.



Whether you're writing a letter or producing a club magazine, you're going to need a printer. **Jason Holborn** reviews and rates the current market of dot-matrix, inkjets and lasers.

Know the name of a good printer?



If you've got an Amiga then the next best thing you should get hold of is a printer. We pick out some of the best inkjets, dot-matrix and lasers.

WHETHER IT'S GRAPHICS, desktop publishing, word processing, music making or programming that you use your Amiga for; having any of these programs without a printer is much like having a guitar that only has one string. Sure you can make a few noises, but you can't show off your real skills. Once you have a printer connected to your Amiga though, no matter how basic, you can share your creations with the rest of the world by dumping them out on to paper.

A development of the common typewriter, printers have been around almost as long as computers themselves, but they have certainly come along way since the days of the rather noisy line-printers that used to be a common sight in the computer rooms of the Sixties. These days computer printers are capable of producing pages of the kind of sharpness, quality and speed of printout that would have turned computer users green with envy little more than 10 years ago. They have also become considerably cheaper. Now if you want to print out your colourful *Deluxe Paint* creations, you can buy full-colour printers for little more than a couple of hundred pounds.

All printers basically do the same job, but that's not to say that they're all the same. Far from it; getting the image off your Amiga screen and on to a piece of A4 can vary immensely. There are basically three different types of printer that are available for the Amiga these days: dot-matrix printers (DMP), inkjet (not forgetting the Canon-pioneered Bubblejet) and laser printers.

Each genre has its own distinct advantages and disadvantages; it might be that they are the cheapest, or they're the quickest, maybe it's just that they have a superb quality of printout, so don't just buy a printer because that's the type you are familiar with. It's very possible you will find that a different type of printer is far more suitable for your own particular needs. To get you more acquainted , here's a rundown of the types of printer you're likely to encounter:

DOT MATRIX – this is the most common type of printer available today, and also the cheapest. Dot-matrix printers work simply by forming each character that appears on the page from a group (or matrix) of pins that then stamp on to an inked ribbon, that in turn marks the paper and gives you your final printout: you can usually make out the dots!

Dot-matrix printers come in basically two different flavours: 9-pin and 24-pin. 9-pin printers just use a smaller number of pins to form the print head matrix, so the quality is obviously not as good as what you would get from a 24-pin printer. 24-pin printers are capable of producing both plain text and graphical output rivalling that of an inkjet (more on those shortly), although all dot-matrix printers (9 and 24-pin) tend to be rather noisy because of the sound of the pins physically striking the ribbon and then the paper, but you do get used to it, believe me.

JARGON BUSTERS

DRAFT – all dot-matrix printers offer draft printing. Draft printing sacrifices print quality for raw speed. While draft text is not good enough for finished work it is ideal for long program listings. All dot-matrix printers offer at least one draft printing mode. Another form of draft is high speed draft which increases the output speed of the printer still further but print quality suffers even more.

NLQ – most modern printers offer at least one NLQ (Near Letter Quality) font. NLQ fonts are far more defined and therefore are of a much higher quality making them ideal for finished documents. Printing in NLQ mode usually slows a printer down though. More upmarket printers also offer SLQ (Super Letter quality) fonts which – as the name suggests – are even better quality than NLQ fonts.

CPS – Characters Per Second is a rating of printer speed. While not strictly accurate for printing pictures, it indicates how many individual characters of text a printer can produce in a second. Manufacturers will usually quote two cps ratings – one for draft printing and one for NLQ printing.

DPI – (Dots Per Inch). As an indication of a printer's resolution, manufacturers rate their printers in terms of how many dots per inch they can produce – the higher the dpi-rating, the better the quality. Most printers (including lasers) are capable of between 240 and 360 dpi while a professional Imagesetter (that's the printer we use to churn out the pages of ***Amiga Format***) can handle a resolution of up to 2400dpi!

FONTS - don't confuse these with typefaces. A font is a specific 'weight' of a typeface. Times is a typeface; Times Bold is a font.

FONTS, RESIDENT – resident fonts are the fonts that are actually built into a printer. In the case of a dot matrix, the more resident fonts you have the better.

CENTRONICS INTERFACE – Printers



INK JET

As the paper passes in front of the nozzle, the stream of ink is switched on and off as appropriate, so building up the image.

Ink Reservoir
Droplet of ink
Ink flow
Piezo-electric pump

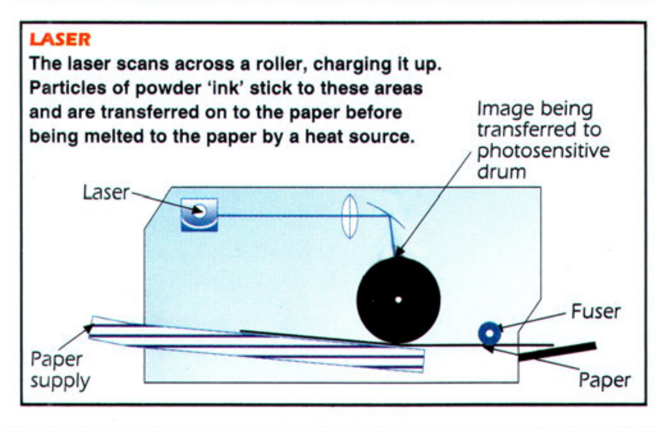
DOT MATRIX

A dot-matrix shoots little groups of metal pins (a matrix) at the paper. The pins strike through an inked ribbon, so making an image.The letters are formed as a pattern of dots.

Face of print head
Print wires inside head
Print wires firing

LASER

The laser scans across a roller, charging it up. Particles of powder 'ink' stick to these areas and are transferred on to the paper before being melted to the paper by a heat source.



Dot matrix printers are still the choice for many users, though, because they can deliver good quality results at low-cost and don't cost an arm and a leg to run.

INKJET – a fairly recent development in the printer market, the inkjet works by replacing the dot-matrix printer's pins with a series of minute nozzles that actually spray the ink on to the page. An even newer development in this field is the BubbleJet printer pioneered by Canon. The BubbleJet gives even better results because the tiny nozzles that form the characters you see on the page are even smaller than those of the inkjet.

BubbleJets get their name from the printing process that they use – instead of electrically forcing the ink out of the nozzle, a BubbleJet uses tiny elements to heat the ink that is inside each nozzle. As soon as the ink reaches a certain temperature, bubbles are formed which force the ink out of the nozzle and on to the page. As the ink leaves the nozzle, more ink then flows in.

Inkjet printers still don't seem to have achieved the success that they rightly deserve, despite the fact that they've dropped their price quite dramatically over the past few months. The print quality of an inkjet is substantially better than that of a dot matrix (plus they are a hell of a lot quieter) and it is second only to a laser. For all sorts of printing tasks, an inkjet is the ideal tool.

LASER – if you want to get the best possible results from your printer, apart from going out and spending tens of thousands of pounds on an ImageSetter, then you need to get yourself a laser. (Though you will find them to be a bit expensive.) Contrary to popular belief, laser printers don't actually work by burning an image on to the paper with a laser.

The way that laser printers do work, though, is a fairly complex one. First of all, a copy of the image that you want to print out is built-up in the printer's memory (the more RAM that your printer has, then the faster the printer process will be, because more of the image will be able to be stored). This built-up image is then used as a template by the laser beam itself.

A sheet of paper is then fed into the printer. It is then electrostatically charged to a positive polarity.

generally come with either a Centronics or a serial interface. If the printer uses a serial interface then it can be connected to the Amiga via the serial port. If it has a centronics interface then it is connected via the parallel port. The Centronics connector is just another form of parallel interface.

FONTS, SCALEABLE – some modern dot-matrix printers also offer scalable fonts. These are fonts that can be increased (or decreased) in size with no apparent loss in quality (increasing a conventional font in size usually produces 'jaggies' – rough edges). Scaleable fonts can usually be increased to up to 40 point.

EMULATION – as the name suggests, emulation enables one printer to behave as if it was a different make of printer altogether. In fact it is very unusual to find a printer that uses its own proprietary command set (control codes for the printer). Instead, printer manufacturers rely on industry-standard emulations such as EpsonX, EpsonQ, IBM ProPrinter and NEC P20 to drive their printers. This is done to ensure that existing printers' drivers will be able to drive their new printer.

BUFFER – because the Amiga is able to output data to a printer a lot faster than it can be printed, most printers offer what is known as a printer buffer. This is basically a temporary store where the data can be pulled in at full speed from the computer. This ensures that the computer is not forced to wait for the printer each time it wants to send fresh data.

TRACTOR FEED – this is a mechanism that is used to pull continuous listing paper into a printer. Along both sides of the paper are small holes at regular intervals, these are used by a wheel containing a series of sprockets to pull the paper along and through the printer.

SHEET FEEDER – when using single sheets of paper with a printer it is usually up to the user to feed in each new piece of paper as and when it is needed. A sheet feeder frees you from this task by automatically feeding in fresh sheets of paper – all you have to do is to load the sheet feeder with a ream of paper at the start of your printing session.

DIP SWITCHES – because printers are generally designed to work with more than one type of computer, it is necessary to configure them to work with your own system. Older printers use what are known as 'DIP (Dual Inline Pole) switches', each of which can be turned on or off. When set in a particular order they tell the printer to behave in a particular way (which emulation mode to use, for example). Thankfully DIP switches are becoming a thing of the past, allowing printers to be configured via their front panel displays. You should be aware, though, that there are many printers that still employ these devices for low-level configuration.

POSTSCRIPT – this is a page description language designed specifically for laser printers and Imagesetters. If you buy a laser that offers PostScript compatibility then it cannot be driven by the standard printer drivers. Instead the programs that you run must be capable of outputting in PostScript format. Most Amiga desktop publishing programs support Postscript but many others (such as *Deluxe Paint*) don't, make sure to check before you buy your printer.

HP LASERJET - possibly the most common standard for laser printers, the HP LaserJet standard allows you to print to a laser printer from any application that uses the Amiga's standard printer device. The current release of the Amiga HP LaserJet driver leaves much to be desired however, so a Postscript-compatible laser will be a much better bet if you intend using the laser to print pages from a desktop publishing program such as Gold Disk's *Professional Page*.



The laser, which gives the printer its name, fires a precise charge (negative) at a photosensitive drum. This obviously takes quite some time because most lasers are capable of producing 90,000 dots for every square inch of printout at 300 dpi. This charge (which has built up the image) attracts the positively charged toner – this is a very sticky, ink-based substance.

The paper is now passed over the drum. Because it has been positively charged, it attracts the negatively charged toner. At this point, though, the only thing that is keeping the toner attached to the paper is the static charge that has been created.

In order to actually bond the toner to the paper, the paper is heated up (and in some cases it is slightly crushed). This is why laser printed paper always feels very warm to touch when it is taken straight out of the printer. So now you know!

One thing which should be noted is that all lasers are in fact 'page printers'. That is, they always work on a page at a time irrespective of how many you're trying to print at one time. Even if you only print two or three lines of text, the laser will still have to use up a whole sheet of paper.

Because they are so expensive (and so is the toner by the way), laser printers aren't really ideal if all you really need them for is printing out text. If you are intending just to print words, you should have a look at either a dot-matrix or inkjet printer. However, if you need a printer for professional DTP and graphics applications, then the laser is second to none, but so is the price.

All the tests you'll find over the next seven pages have been carried out on a standard Amiga 2000 using the *Professional Page 3* DTP package and Arnor's *Protext* word processor. Oh and by the way – we used environment-friendly recycled paper throughout our extensive tests so no trees bit the dust during the reviews.

CHOOSING A PRINTER

There are just so many printers available now that it's important to understand all the benefits each one offers, here's a rundown of the sort of things you should check before handing over your hard-earned cash.

EMULATION – it sounds a rather obvious one to point out, but always check that the printer you buy can be driven by your Amiga. (You won't believe the amount of calls we get from people who've bought a printer only to find it doesn't work on their Amiga) In the case of dot-matrix and inkjet printers, you should always check that the printer can emulate either the EpsonX range (for 9-pins) or the EpsonQ range (for 24-pin and inkjets) series printers. Most printers also support the IBM ProPrinter standard, but Epson emulation is undoubtedly the best.

PRINTER DRIVERS – Even if the printer does emulate an Epson, it's still well worth checking whether or not an Amiga printer driver is available specifically for it. These drivers usually come from third-party developers (PD libraries are good sources) but some manufacturers (notably Canon and Citizen) are now starting to write Amiga drivers specifically for their printers.

LEADS – Your new printer won't do anything unless it's connected to your Amiga. When buying a printer you should therefore insist that an appropriate printer lead is supplied. Don't leave the shop without one.

RUNNING COSTS – Having the most wizzo printer in the world is all very good, but you'll soon start to regret buying it if it costs and arm and a leg to run. On the whole, dot matrix printers are the cheapest printers to run. Because of the outlay for toner, inks and, in some cases, even new drums, lasers and inkjets (especially colour inkjets) can prove to be expensive. This is where you must decide just how much printing you are intending to do over the next few years. Quality or long-term cost/benefit?

RIBBON/INK AVAILABILITY – Never buy a printer that doesn't use ink cartridges or ribbons that are not commonly available from either a local supplier or through mail order. If the printer runs out of ink and you can't find a supplier of new ribbons, the printer will be useless.

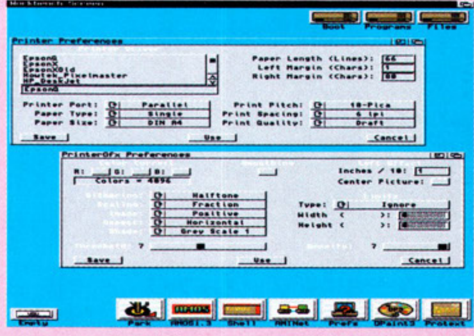
NOISE LEVEL – Printers basically come in two flavours – impact (dot matrix) and non-impact (lasers and inkjets). Non-impact printers are generally very quiet. On the other hand, some dot matrix printers can be very noisy indeed, so always ask for a demonstration in the shop (of the exact printer you are going to pay money for, rather than the one that has been in the window for the last two months) before buying unless you want to fall out with your next door neighbours.

TEXT – Unless you only ever intend printing program listings, it's very important to check that the printer offers either NLQ (Near Letter Quality) or (better still) LQ (Letter Quality) printing modes. Also remember to check that the printer offers more than one font (don't confuse this with a Typeface, the two are not the same. For example, Helvetica is a typeface whereas Italicised Helvetica in 10 point is a font) – if you grow tired of the default font, multi-font printers give you a selection of alternatives.

INSTALLING A PRINTER



Workbench 1.3 uses a single program to configure a printer. Just load up Preferences and single click on the 'Install Printer' gadget and you're away.



Workbench 2 makes things so much easier by splitting Preferences into several smaller programs. Two programs are used to install a printer – *Printer* and *PrinterGFX*.

Printers have always been a source of considerable frustration for Amiga users. But printer installation need not be a particularly painful exercise. Providing that you know exactly what printer driver you need, the process of setting up a printer is actually very simple indeed.

If you're running under either Workbench 1.3 or 2.04, you'll almost certainly have to copy the printer driver you require across on to your Workbench (or boot) disk from the Amiga Extras disk supplied with your machine. Commodore supply a fairly healthy selection of drivers for a wide range of printers but even if the printer you own is not listed, chances are that the printer will be able to emulate one of the printers covered (virtually all dot-matrix printers offer EpsonX or EpsonQ emulation, for example).

Once you've located the driver, all you then have to do is to copy it across into the DEVS:Printers directory and that's the hard bit done.

Next you'll have to load up Preferences and tell the Amiga which printer driver you wish to use. Under Workbench 1.3, you'll have to load the main Preferences program and then click on the 'Change Printer' gadget.

Under 2.04, open up the 'Prefs' drawer and click on the 'Printer' program icon. Providing that the driver has been copied successfully and been placed into the correct directory, you should see a list of available printer drivers appear along with a whole host of other options. All you now have to do then is click on the driver that you want to use, click on the port that the printer is connected to (parallel or serial) and Bob's your uncle – click on 'Save' and you will have now installed your printer.

Most Amiga applications will happily print to your printer quite easily, but there may be some that still complain (mainly those that do complex printouts) so you may have to tinker around with the other printer options available. If you continue to have problems, then it's well worth buying a decent book on the subject – I personally recommend you get hold of *Mastering Amiga Printers* from Bruce Smith Books (0923 894355).



Citizen Swift 9/9x



Citizen's answer to the dominance of Star in the 9-pin dot-matrix market is the Swift 9 and Swift 9x (the 9x is a wide-carriage version of the Swift 9). Visually it's nothing special, the Swift 9 is a capable enough printer offering printing speeds of 160 cps in draft mode (or 213 in high speed mode) and 40 cps in NLQ mode.

The Swift 9 connects to the Amiga via the parallel port. Unfortunately like so many of the printers featured, Citizen don't supply a suitable lead so you're left to buy this yourself. The Swift 9 is fully supported under Citizen's *Print Manager* program although it will happily work under EpsonX and IBM ProPrinter emulation. It's quiet too – Citizen quote a noise level of around 51dBA in quiet mode.

It's often hard to judge the differences between printers from printouts alone, but with the Citizen 9 the difference is clear. When printing from *ProPage*, Compugraphic fonts are smoother and more well defined than all the competition. Although the range of fonts is nothing to write home about, the Citizen Swift 9 is still a great printer.

matrix and inkjet technology, many users are finding that these cheaper alternatives are capable of producing more than acceptable output. Indeed, several low budget magazines and fanzines are now using Inkjet printers such as Canon's highly acclaimed BJ10-ex for printing their masterpages. Although an inkjet is expensive to run, they cost a fraction of the price of even the cheapest Postscript laser.
Postscript produces by far the best results from a laser, but there
important aspect of any DTP system is the quality of your output. Most professional DTP systems use expensive laser or even

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **84%**

Epson LX400



The educational world's favourite company, Epson, have made their assault on the 9-pin market with the release of the LX400, a nifty 9-pin that boasts very simple operation but unfortunately little else. In true Epson tradition, the LX400 is a rather dull boxy little beast that looks about as an impressive as a shoe box.

The specification of the LX400 is nothing worth writing home about either. While the draft printing speed of 150cps is acceptable enough, you'd be left waiting a very long time (it can only manage 25cps) if you tried to print out a long document in NLQ mode. Two NLQ fonts are on offer (Roman and SanSerif), both of which are nothing special. Graphics printing holds the Amiga up a tad too – the LX400 only comes with a 3K printer buffer.

I'd love to be able to say a few nice words about the LX400, but (try as I might) I found little about it worth recommending. I really do think that it's about time Epson stopped resting on their reputation and started developing printers that can compete in today's competitive printer market.

matrix and inkjet technology, many users are finding that these cheaper alternatives are capable of producing more than acceptable output. Indeed, several low budget magazines and fanzines are now using Inkjet printers such as Canon's highly acclaimed BJ10-ex for printing their masterpages. Although an inkjet is expensive to run, they cost a fraction of the price of even the cheapest Postscript laser.
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important aspect of any DTP system is the quality of your output. Most professional DTP systems use expensive laser or even

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **50%**

Star LC20



The Amiga user's favourite must be the Star LC20. the latest version of a long line of Star 9-pins. Having owned a Star 9-pin myself a few years back, I feel a degree of sentimentality towards the Star 9-pins (even if my NL-10 did self destruct!).

The range of fonts on the LC20 is pretty good. It comes as standard with one draft font and three NLQ fonts, though none of them are very exciting. Printing speed is pretty good though – 150cps in draft mode and 37.5 cps in NLQ, although this is still slower than the Citizen. Emulations on offer are the usual EpsonX and IBM ProPrinter.

One thing I found to be a problem was paper feeding. For starters, the LC20 can't load and form feed (eject) paper automatically. Although it has a feed button, you have to keep it pressed until the paper is in place. Our review model has a habit of chewing up paper too, something that was a common problem with the old NL-10. Gripes aside though, I like the LC20. It's no longer the show stopper that it used to be, but for the price it's still a good solid and reliable printer nonetheless.

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AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **65%**

Panasonic KXP1170

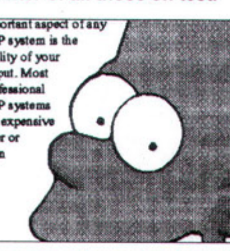


Panasonic produce everything videos, TVs, camcorders and even multisync monitors (see last month's issue!) but they'd also like you to take home a KXP1170, an attractive looking 9-pin that just happens to be a pretty capable performer too.

As you'd expect, the KXP1170 boasts the usual emulation modes for EpsonX and IBM ProPrinter operation. Printing speed is an acceptable 192cps in draft mode, 38cps in NLQ mode with a choice of one draft and three NLQ fonts (it's just a shame that the fonts look so similar!). It comes as standard with a 6K printer buffer which is expandable to 38K. If it wasn't for the fact that the KXP1170 is a bit of a noisy beast, it would be a great little printer.

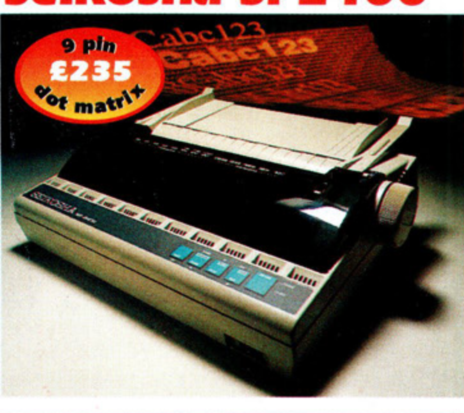
One nice feature, though, is its control panel, an easy to use affair that is quickly grasped. Paper loading is simple, though the paper doesn't always load correctly leaving you to adjust it slightly. Taking this into account, the KXP1170 is a well-endowed printer. Extra fonts (different to those already installed) would have been nice, but then it is the second cheapest printer of all those on test.

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AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **80%**

Seikosha SP2400



A very capable little 9-pin that will do nothing for the style conscious but lots for those looking for a cheap 9-pin that performs well.

The SP2400's control panel is annoying. Even basic operations such as selecting a different font requires a lot of button pushing. Why can't Seikosha just add a couple of extra buttons for font selection instead of forcing us to memorise complex button sequences?

Once the SP2400 is set up it's a mean performer by any standards. Printing speed is rapid 120cps in draft mode, 150cps in high-speed draft mode and 60 cps in NLQ node with a selection of seven fonts (two draft, five NLQ). For straight text printouts, the SP2400 wins the 9-pin battle hands down. But for graphic printouts, the Citizen still holds the throne.

The SP2400 offers EpsonX and IBM ProPrinter emulations as standard and comes equipped with a massive 21k printer buffer (in Epson mode – it's only 9.3k in IBM mode). In all, the SP2400 is the best budget printer money can buy. While not as polished as the Citizen, it still compares very well.

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DTP system is the quality of your output. Most professional DTP systems use expensive laser or even

AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **89%**

Citizen Swift 24x



Citizen have stormed the 24-pin market with their Swift 24x, a wide-carriage version of the Swift 24 (not reviewed, although the specifications also apply). Not commonly used by home users, wide carriage printers are a favourite in the corporate market as they allow large amounts of data to be crammed on to a single page.

Thanks to Citizen's excellent *Print Manager* suite of printer drivers, you can use the 24x's facilities to their full without messing around with Commodore's complex printer drivers. Although not astounding, the 24x is capable of churning out text at a respectable 160cps in draft mode and 53cps in NLQ. A total of five fonts are on offer, four of which are NLQ. The 24x comes as standard with an 8K printer buffer which is expandable to 40K.

Like Citizen's 240C, the 24x uses a combination of slider buttons and a handy LCD screen which makes setting up and accessing the printer's functions a doddle. Print quality is good, though the fonts and printing speed let an otherwise good printer down. It's just a shame it's so expensive!

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AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **60%**

Panasonic KXP1123



Panasonic produce two 24-pins, this being the 'budget' offering. It features the same good looks as its 9-pin counterpart, the KXP1170, but with a greater range of fonts, a more powerful control panel and print quality only a 24-pin can deliver.

An aspect of the KXP1123 that I'm keen on is its easy to use control panel. Although it doesn't boast an LCD screen like its big brother the KXP1124i, the KXP1123 uses a series of LEDs that indicate which options are currently selected.

Offering both EpsonQ and IBM ProPrinter compatibility, the KXP1123 offers a respectable print speed of 240cps in draft mode and 53cps in NLQ mode. There's a total of four NLQ fonts on offer plus one draft mode font. These fonts are of high quality, though newer printers offer a wider range. The KXP1123 comes with a rather measly 6K printer buffer, though this can be upgraded to 38K.

The print quality is good compared to the competition, but it's by no means the most powerful 24-pin available. Having seen the competition, I have to say the KXP1123 is still a goody in my book.

matrix and inkjet technology, many users are finding that these cheaper alternatives are capable of producing more than acceptable output. Indeed, several low budget magazines and fanzines are now using Inkjet printers such as Canon's highly acclaimed BJ10-ex for printing their masterpages. Although an inkjet is expensive to run, they cost a fraction of the price of even the cheapest Postscript laser.
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AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **80%**

Citizen Notebook



This was originally designed as a portable printer but its print quality is so good it can give even the best 24-pins a run for their money. In fact you'll wonder how a printer so small (it's no bigger than a box of Jaffa Cakes!) can produce such seriously good results, especially when printing graphics.

Why the Notebook does produce such good results is the type of ribbon used. Instead of the usual fabric ribbon most dot-matrix printers use, the Notebook uses a film ribbon. Designed for printing on to overhead projector transparencies, film ribbons give a more even spread of ink but don't last as long as fabric.

Technically, the Notebook isn't 24 pin. Instead it uses a 48-pin head which accounts for its quality. Offering a resolution of 260 by 260 dpi, it can print 30 pages before its battery needs recharging. For home use Citizen provide an external power supply. The Notebook doesn't have a draft printing mode, so the only performance figure Citizen quote is 53cps for the two NLQ mode fonts that are on offer. It's also a very quiet printer – just 49dBA.

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AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **82%**

Citizen 224



Sharing much the same sort of specification to the 24x, the 224 fails to impress when compared to rivals the KXP1124i and the Epson LQ570.

The 224 shares the same system of sliders that is common to all Citizen printer control panels. I'm surprised it doesn't feature an LCD strip, though Citizen have started to use these in their new range of Swift 2 series printers. Paper loading is also very good – all you do is pop a piece of paper into the paper guide and the printer automatically pulls it in.

Like the 24x, it boasts printing speeds of 150cps in draft mode and 53cps in NLQ mode. Like its big brother, there are just four NLQ fonts on offer plus one draft mode font. Resolution is a healthy 360 by 360dpi though. Most 24-pins have this kind of high resolution, but only Citizen's printers enable you to access this kind of resolution thanks to the Citizen *Printer Manager* (the standard Workbench EpsonQ driver only supports a resolution of 360 by 240dpi! – always remember this when buying a printer).

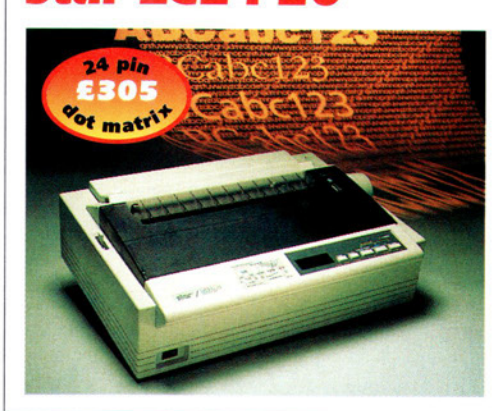
Specification-wise it's nothing special, but if you can live without extra fonts get it for its ease of use.

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AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **78%**

Star LC24-20



Thankfully the LC24-20 doesn't feature the same styling as the newer Star printers. In fact, it's actually a very good looking printer. One aspect of the LC24-20 that sets it aside from the competition in terms of ease of use is its extra large LCD screen which gives you instant access to all the fonts on offer simply by scrolling through the on-screen list. These sort of oversized LCD screens are such a good idea that I'm surprised that more printer manufacturers aren't using them.

As well as the now customary EpsonQ and IBM ProPrinter emulations, the LC24-20 also offers NEC 24-wire graphics compatibility. Printing speed is a very respectable 160cps in draft mode (or 210 in high-speed mode) and 53cps in NLQ. It also offers two Draft mode fonts and five NLQ fonts with the option of SLQ (Super Letter Quality) fonts on cartridge. A 16K printer buffer comes as standard.

Considering its price, the LC24-20 is good value for money. It might not be the most capable 24 pin, but the price versus performance ratio is unmatched. If you want a cheap 24 pin, buy this.

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AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **85%**

Epson LQ570



Considering the disappointment of the LX400, Epson have actually come up trumps with the LQ570, the latest addition to their range of 24-pin printers. The styling of the LX400 has been booted out of the window in favour of a more up-to-date design that reflects the style-conscious needs of the Amiga buyer. Combined with an impressive specification, it seems that at last there is an Epson dot matrix printer worth its money.

The control panel is well laid out. The list of fonts is shown in a separate panel, each displayed as it will appear in print making font selection easy. What's more, the LQ570 doesn't have to be taken offline every time you change font.

Printing speed is very quick – 225cps in high-speed mode, 210 in normal draft and 70cps in NLQ. It comes as standard with a large selection of fonts (10 in all) including a couple of unusual fonts.

Coming in at the same price as the Panasonic KXP1124i, the Epson beats Panasonic's offering in terms of specification, although the print quality isn't as good as some of the competition.

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DTP system is the quality of your output. Most professional DTP systems use expensive laser or even

AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **80%**

Panasonic KXP1124i



If the KXP1123 is too basic for you, then Panasonic have something to offer you, in the shape of the KXP1124i, which leaves its rivals standing in terms of NLQ printing speed.

Panasonic have gone to town with the paper-loading facilities. The KXP1124i can take paper from three different sources located at the front, rear and bottom of the printer. The front panel controls are pretty good too thanks to a feature that I'm very fond of, the LCD screen.

Print performance is pretty impressive – the KXP1124i comes with three draft fonts, seven NLQ fonts and one SLQ font. This impressive range of fonts is punched on to paper at a rate of 200cps in draft mode and a very impressive 80cps in NLQ mode. The printer comes with a 12K printer buffer which can be expanded to 44K. The only spanner in the KXP1124i's works is its rather noisy operation. Apart from this, it is undoubtedly the best 24-pin mono printer money can buy. It offers an extensive range of fonts, it prints NLQ fonts faster than any of the competition, and it's very flexible.

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important aspect of any DTP system is the quality of your output. Most professional DTP systems use expensive laser or even

AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **88%**

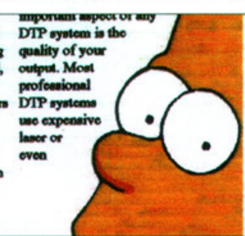
CBM MPS1550C



Commodore's colour offering is the CBM MPS1550C, a 9-pin dot matrix. Despite the fact Commodore probably know the Amiga and its capabilities better than anyone else, previous efforts from them have been poor to say the least. Is the CBM MPS1550C about to change all that? Sadly I think not.

One thing in the CBM MPS1550C's favour is that it is one of only two of the printers on test that comes complete with a printer lead, although Commodore don't supply a dedicated printer driver. Being fully Epson and IBMProPrinter compatible though, the CBM MPS1550C can be driven by means of the standard Workbench drivers.

Overall impressions? The styling is old fashioned and there's no mechanical paper-loading option – you have to wind the paper in by hand! It's also noisy and slow – print speed is 120cps in draft mode and 25cps in NLQ mode. Print quality is bad, and there's only one font. The results are washed out and blurry – not what you'd expect from a printer produced by the same company as the Amiga


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Postscript produces by far

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AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **48%**

Star LC200



Aesthetically the LC20 and LC200 look the same, but the LC200 is the more capable of the two. The LC200 comes complete with five NLQ fonts (one more than the LC20) and offers a 16K printer buffer (12K more) although print speed is virtually the same – 150cps (but this can be accelerated to 200cps using high-speed mode) in draft and 37.5cps in NLQ mode. Star don't produce printer drivers for the Amiga, so the LC200 must be driven by an EpsonX or IBM ProPrinter compatible driver. Compared to the CBM MPS1550C, the Star is also very quiet – this is helped still further by a 'Quiet' mode that attempts to dampen printer acoustics.

Print quality is good, but not perfect. Colour printouts show signs of smearing and a print head alignment problem resulting in a mix of black and blue lines every tine a solid black is required. I'm assured, though, that this is not a common problem.

The LC200 isn't a bad printer, but it's not great. The design is second rate, the fonts rather limiting although print quality is good. If you can't stretch the budget to a colour 24-pin, this is the one to buy.

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AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **82%**

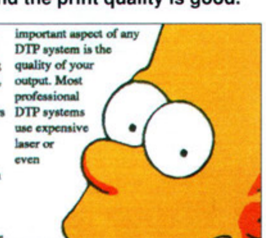
Citizen 240C



The Citizen 240C is simply one of the best 24-pin colour printers money can buy, though it isn't actually a colour printer as standard. Before you can print anything even in colour, it is necessary to install a motor drive unit that controls the repositioning of the colour ribbon. But don't worry this isn't quite as involved as it sounds.

The 240C uses a four-colour ribbon. Once the printer is installed under Preferences all your printouts will be in full colour. It is also a speedy performer – Citizen quote figures of 200cps in draft mode and 66cps in NLQ. It comes with 12 different fonts including OCR-B (optical character recognition) and two scalable fonts.

One aspect I immediately fell in love with is its control panel. Thanks to a clear design and a neat LCD screen which guides you through each operation, the 240C is so simple to use you don't really need to touch the manual. Another impressive extra is a data indicator which shows you when data is being received into the printer's 8K buffer. It's also very quiet (46.5dBA) and the print quality is good.

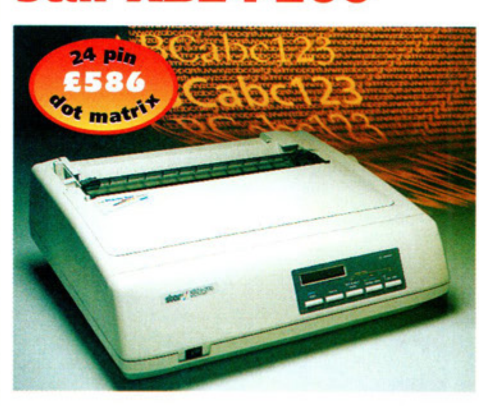

matrix and inkjet technology, many users are finding that these cheaper alternatives are capable of producing more than acceptable output. Indeed, several low budget magazines and fanzines are now using Inkjet printers such as Canon's highly acclaimed BJ10-ex for printing their masterpages. Although an inkjet is expensive to run, they cost a fraction of the price of even the cheapest Postscript laser.

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AMIGA GOLD FORMAT **90%**

Star XB24-200

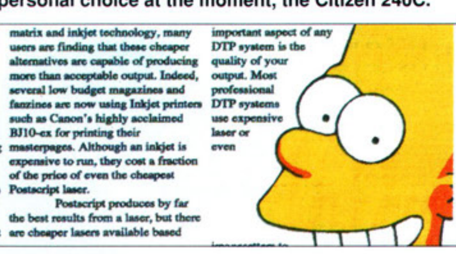


It may not win any awards for looks, but it wins the award for being the heaviest and most chunky printer in its class. It's so bulky (it weighs 10 kgs!) it shakes the table when it prints.

If you can cope with the size and ugliness then you'll find a very capable printer. The XB24-200 boasts the fastest speed of any of the dot-matrix printers on test – 332 cps in high-speed draft mode, 250 cps in draft and 83.3 cps in NLQ mode. It comes with 11 fonts (including Times, Roman, San Serif, Prestige, Courier, Orator and Helvetica.

While Star refuse to acknowledge the existence of the Amiga by not releasing printer drivers, getting the XB24-200 up and running is made easier thanks to its three emulation modes – EpsonQ, NEC 24-wire graphics and the usual IBM ProPrinter emulation. The controls are plain, but well laid out and an LCD display makes setting up the printer easy.

It can output pages from *DPaint* or *ProPage* in full colour, but while the quality of these printouts is good, they're not quite as crisp and sharp as my personal choice at the moment, the Citizen 240C.


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Postscript produces by far the best results from a laser, but there are cheaper lasers available based

important aspect of any DTP system is the quality of your output. Most professional DTP systems use expensive laser or even

AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **75%**



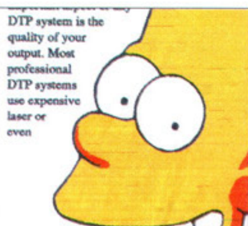
Fujitsu DL1100



The DL1100 is a 24-pin dot matrix that also just happens to be able to handle colour too. Although it may look rather different from the rather flat box-like affairs we've come to know and love, there's no doubting that it performs very well indeed.

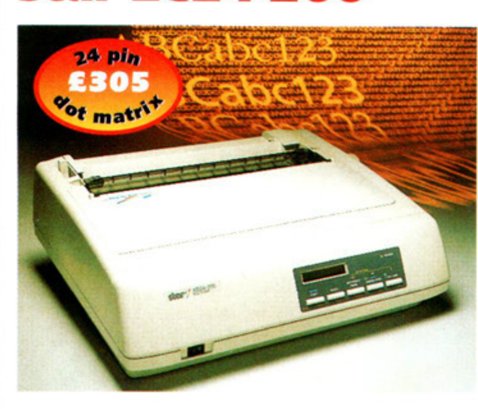
While the Fujitsu is a very capable colour printer for outputting pictures and DTP pages, it is rather limited as a traditional text printer. For starters it only offers two NLQ fonts (Courier and Prestige) making it rather inflexible (although extra fonts can be bought on plug-in cards). Text printing speed is quite acceptable though – 200cps in draft mode and 50 in NLQ mode. One nice feature of the DL1100 though is its emulation options. Although it comes as standard with both EpsonQ and IBM ProPrinter emulations, additional emulations can be bought on plug in cards.

One factor in its favour is its extra large paper rollers which allow A4 pages to be printed in landscape mode. In all, the Fujitsu offers a lot of good extras but fails to deliver on basic features. Oh well, at least it's very cheap!



AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **76%**

Star LC24-200



Star have produced the LC24-200, a cheaper 24-pin colour printer with a very good specification. Unfortunately, the LC24-200 shares the same jelly moulded looks that made the XB24-200's design such rich pickings for my sarcastic tendencies. Star *used* to make good looking printers!

The LC24-200 comes with 2 draft fonts and five quite well-designed NLQ quality. Printing speed is also quite good – 222cps in high-speed mode, 167cps in normal draft and 55.5cps in NLQ. Extra fonts are available. The printer comes with a sizeable 30K printer buffer (the mono version only has a 7K buffer). Emulations wise, there's the usual EpsonQ and IBM ProPrinter emulations on offer.

What really lets it down is its control panel. When compared to the Citizen 240C or Star's own XB24-200, the LC24-200 is archaic. I was not impressed by the printer's acoustic level either – even in high speed draft mode, the LC24-200 was a little annoying to say the least. The Star is £25 cheaper than the Citizen 240C, but that extra money would certainly be well spent.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **77%**

Canon BJ20



Considering BubbleJets were a Canon discovery, you'd be right to expect great things from them. The BJ20 is an enhanced version of the BJ10ex which was the replacement for the classic BJ130ex. For your extra money you get a few extra fonts and a cut-sheet feeder as standard. This feeder holds a large wodge of paper and will automatically feed individual sheets to the printer whenever required.

It comes in two colours - computer cream and a gun-metal grey. Setting up the BJ20 is very easy thanks to Canon's decision to develop custom printer drivers for their entire range of inkjets.

The driver disk doesn't come with the BJ20, but a quick phone call to Canon will have it winging its way to you free of charge. If you do need to get started straight away though, the BJ20 offers full EpsonQ and IBM ProPrinter emulations.

Technically the BJ20 is stunning. Using Canon's own driver you can print graphics from any program at a maximum resolution of 360 x 360 dpi (which is actually higher than that of many laser printers), and the results are breathtaking.

AMIGA FORMAT GOLD **95%**

Canon BJ300



A BubbleJet printer that uses the same tried and tested technology of the BJ20, but with faster operation and a number of other extras on offer. Like the BJ20, it comes with a cut-sheet feeder (as standard) which fits on to the top of the printer.

Once again Canon come up trumps with a custom printer driver which enables the Amiga to get the very best from its printer. There's no messing around with DIP switches – just plug it in, connect it to the Amiga and install Canon's printer driver and all your (compatible) Amiga applications will talk to the BJ300 at its full 360 x 360 dpi resolution.

Like the BJ20, the quality of graphic printouts is brilliant. The only thing that lets it down is its limited fonts. Although extra font cartridges are available, the BJ300 comes as standard with just three fonts – Courier, Prestige and Roman (four less than the BJ20!). Speed of printing is rapid though – 150 cps in LQ mode and 300 in high speed.

Although the Canon steals the show in the low end inkjet market with the BJ20, the BJ300 isn't up to the job when compared with the Citizen ProJet.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **78%**

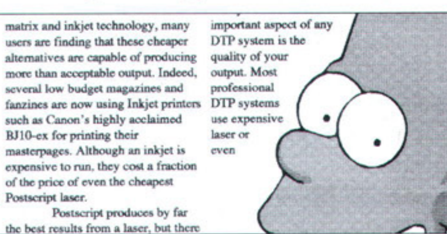
Star SJ48



If the SJ48 looks familiar it's because it's a Canon bubblejet (the Canon BJ10ex). As a result, it can use the same ink cartridges and extras available for both the BJ20 and the BJ10ex. The review version has no ink cartridge or sheet feeder so I have stripped down the BJ20 and connected all the bits and pieces to the Star, all of which work perfectly.

There's not a lot you can say about the SJ48 I haven't already said about the Canon. The SJ48 isn't as well endowed – it only comes with two LQ fonts, and it doesn't emulate the Canon BJ130 so Canon's custom drivers can't be used. As a result, the only way to drive the SJ48 is using the limited Workbench EpsonQ driver which doesn't support resolutions higher than 360 by 240 dpi so you'll never be able to print at 360 x 360 dpi.

The speed of the Star is adequate in LQ mode though – Star themselves quote a speed of 83cps in LQ mode (that's exactly the same speed as the BJ10ex and the BJ20!). The Star SJ48 isn't a bad printer, but you'd be a lot better off going for the real McCoy (which happens to be £100 cheaper!).



matrix and inkjet technology, many users are finding that these cheaper alternatives are capable of producing more than acceptable output. Indeed, several low budget magazines and fanzines are now using Inkjet printers such as Canon's highly acclaimed BJ10-ex for printing their masterpages. Although an inkjet is expensive to run, they cost a fraction of the price of even the cheapest Postscript laser.

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AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **65%**

Citizen ProJet

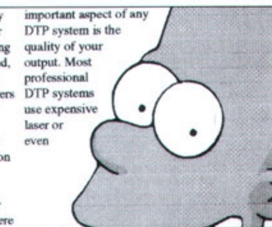


Not wanting to get left out of the inkjet market, Citizen have released the ProJet, a printer that (they claim) has forced the competition to update their products. Citizen see their main rivals as the Canon BJ10ex and BJ20, but the price of the ProJet pits it against more expensive inkjets like the BJ300.

First impressions are good. Although it cannot handle tractor fed paper as standard (this must be bought as an option), it does come as standard with a cut sheet feeder. Paper handling is where it really excels – instead of just dumping each finished sheet of printout on your desk like the BJ20, the ProJet catches the sheet as it is being printed and then drops it into a tray, enabling many pages to be printed without you having to empty it too often.

The Inkjet is a pretty swift too – 360cps in high speed mode, 240cps in draft and an impressive 120cps in LQ mode. The range of fonts is basic but those that are available are very good indeed.

One thing that lets it down is its lack of emulations – it only supports the Hewlett Packard Deskjet standard, though extra emulations are available.



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AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **85%**

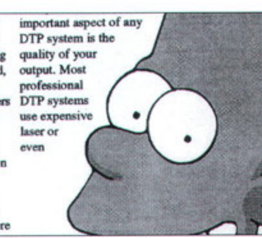
Star Laserprinter4



If you're looking for the ultimate in printing, then look no further. Offering EpsonX and HP LaserJet emulation as standard, the Laserprinter 4 can be driven from nearly any Amiga application, giving you excellent laser-quality results.

The HP LaserJet driver is renowned for its sluggishness: because all lasers are 'page' printers, the laser will happily flash away until the entire page has been built up in memory (this can take 20 minutes when printing from *ProPage* at 300 by 300 dpi!). Despite this, it is still capable of four pages per minute when printing multiple copies.

For the ultimate in speedy printing, you need Starscript, Star's own Postscript emulation board. Because Postscript is a page description language, printing from ProPage is considerably faster. Not only that, but the Starscript also adds an extra 35 fonts (compared to the standard two) and an Appletalk connector (for Macs). Postscript needs a lot of RAM though – you'll need at least 2 Mb to get it to talk to you. It isn't the best laser available, but it's a damned fine printer nonetheless.



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AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **78%**

Epson EPL-4000



Epson's answer to the Star Laserprinter 4, but for less cash. The standard EPL-4000 with 0.5Mb of RAM and HP LaserJet compatibility costs just £939

The review sample only has 0.5 Mb of RAM, so it is useless for anything other than printing standard text. As a rule, never buy a laser unless it comes with at least 2Mb of RAM. Thankfully the EPL-4000 is expandable up to 5.5 Mb (a 2 Mb expansion costs £164, so the cost of a 2 Mb EPL-4000 is still around £70 cheaper than Star's 1 Mb Laserprinter 4!).

The printer comes configured for HP LaserJet emulation so you don't have to mess around with emulation options. It offers a maximum resolution of 300 by 300 dpi, two fonts (the manual claims the printer has 14, but this figure includes styles as well) but can chuck pages out at a much faster rate - 6 ppm (pages per minute) than the Star's 4 ppm.

Epson printers are usually more expensive but they've managed to oust Star from the laserprinter throne. Their Postscript emulation could be cheaper though. If you need Postscript then buy the Star. If your needs are simpler, then go for this.



Jason Holborn checks out the printing options available to the desktop publisher on a tight budget.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **80%**

ALL THOSE PRINTERS AT A GLANCE

Printer	Colour	Fonts	Emulations	Options	Extra features	Price	Supplier	Rating
Citizen Swift 9/9x	Option	1 Draft 3 NLQ	Epson X IBM Proprinter	Sheet feeder Colour option	Full colour using Citizen's kit, around £40	£280	Citizen 0753 584111	84%
Epson LX400	No	1 Draft 2 NLQ	EpsonX IBM ProPrinter	Cut sheet feeder	None	£199	Epson 0800 220546	50%
Star LC20 Multifont	No	1 Draft 3 NLQ	EpsonX IBM ProPrinter	Cut sheet feeder	DIP switches for easy configuration	£235	Quidis Bytech 0344 427676	65%
Panasonic KXP1170	No	1 Draft 3 NLQ	EpsonX IBM ProPrinter	Cut sheet feeder buffer memory expansion	By far the best control panel on any 9-pin	£218	Frontline 0256 463344	80%
Seikosha SP2400	No	2 Draft 5 NLQ	EpsonX IBM ProPrinter	Cut sheet feeder	Extremely fast draft quality printing	£235	SDL 081-309 5000	89%
Citizen Swift 24x	Option	1 Draft 4 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut sheet feeder Colour option	Wide carriage printing	£573	Citizen 0753 584111	60%
Panasonic KXP1123	No	1 Draft 4 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut sheet feeder Buffer memory expansion	None	£282	Frontline 0276 463344	80%
Citizen Notebook	No	2 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Extra battery pack Car battery adaptor	Tiny in size will fit in a briefcase with ease	£380	Citizen 0753 584111	82%
Citizen 224	Option	1 Draft 4 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut sheet feeder Colour option Buffer memory expansion	Automatic paper loading	£216	Citizen 0753 584111	78%
Star LC24-20 Multifont	Option	1 Draft 4 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder Colour option Buffer memory expansion Font cartridges	High quality SLQ fonts available on cartridge	£305	Quidis Bytech 0344 427676	86%
Epson LQ570	No	1 draft 9 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder	Wide range of fonts but not best print quality	£399	Epson 0800 220546	80%
Panasonic KXP1124i	No	3 draft 7 NLQ 1 SLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder Font cards Buffer memory expansion	Extensive paper handling facilities make it a cut above the rest	£340	Frontline 0276 463344	88%
CBM MPS1550C	Yes	1 draft 1 NLQ	EpsonX IBM ProPrinter	None	None	£160	SDL 081 309 5000	48%
Star LC200	Yes	1 draft 5 NLQ	EpsonX IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder Serial interface	Electronic DIP switches for front panel configuration	£259	Quidis Bytech 0344 427676	82%
Citizen 240-C	Yes	2 draft 8 NLQ 2 Scale	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder Buffer memory expansion	Quarter size printing allows an A4 to be printed to a Filofax page	£435	Citizen 0753 584111	FG90%
Star XB24-200	Yes	1 draft 5 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter NEC Graphics	Cut-sheet feeder Font cartridges Buffer memory expansion	LCD display panel and excellent manual make this printer a joy to use	£586	Quidis Bytech 0344 427676	75%
Fujitsu DL1100	Yes	1 draft 2 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder Buffer memory expansion Emulation & font cards	A4 pages can be printed in landscape orientation	£350	Fujitsu 081-573 4444	76%
Star LC24-200	Yes	2 draft 5 NLQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder Buffer memory expansion Font cards	Electronic DIP switches for front panel configuration	£410	Quidis Bytech 0344 427676	77%
Canon BJ20	No	1 draft 7 LQ	BJ130, EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Battery pack	Utility to allow you to download Amiga Fonts	£299	Canon 0800 252223	FG95%
Canon BJ300	No	1 draft 3 LQ	BJ300, EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Font cards		£499	Canon 0800 252223	78%
Star SJ48	No	1 draft 3 LQ	EpsonQ IBM ProPrinter	Cut-sheet feeder Battery pack	No Amiga driver so high resolutions may not work	£583	Quidis Bytech 0344 427676	65%
Citizen Projet	No	1 draft 3 NLQ	HP Deskjet II	Emulation and Font cards Tractor feed units	Optional high quality citizen driver software	£583	Citizen 0753 584111	85%
Star Laserprinter 4 Starscript	No	2 or 35	HP Deskjet II Epson X	Postscript emulator card Buffer memory expansion Font Cartridges	Simple to use LCD panel makes setting up very easy.	£1173 £1643 (with PS)	Quidis Bytech 0344 427676	78%
Epson EPL-4000	No	2LQ	HP LaserJet Epson X IBM Proprinter	Postscript emulator card Buffer memory expansion Font Cartidges	Without postscript card the printer is hindered by the HP LaserJet driver.	£939 £1102 (2.5 Mb)	Epson 0800 220546	80%

AND LAST, BUT NOT LEAST

There's actually a number of other printers available too. If you lok at any magazine for the IBM PC and compatibles, you'll see hundreds advertised, most of which will work with the Amiga. What we tried to do was rationalise this a little bit by only reviewing printers that are widely advertised in the Amiga market.

Unfortunately, a couple of our hand-picked printers didn't make it in time to be included. Two Olivetti models, the JP-150 and JP-350 inkjets, are fairly uncommon but worth a look. The Hewlet Packard HP-500 inkjet printer is an old standard, and should be looked at. The NEC P-20 dot matrix is an excellent printer: unfortunately, our review model broke down. Do consider it.

One printer we were particularly keen on getting hold of was the Ricoh PCL5 laser (pictured right). This is probably the cheapest laser printer you'll see anywhere and has a remarkable specification: 2Mb of RAM, six pages per minute speed and 400 dpi resolution, which is currently too detailed for any Amiga software! At this price and with this spec you should certainly consider it: it's available from Silica on 081-309 1111.





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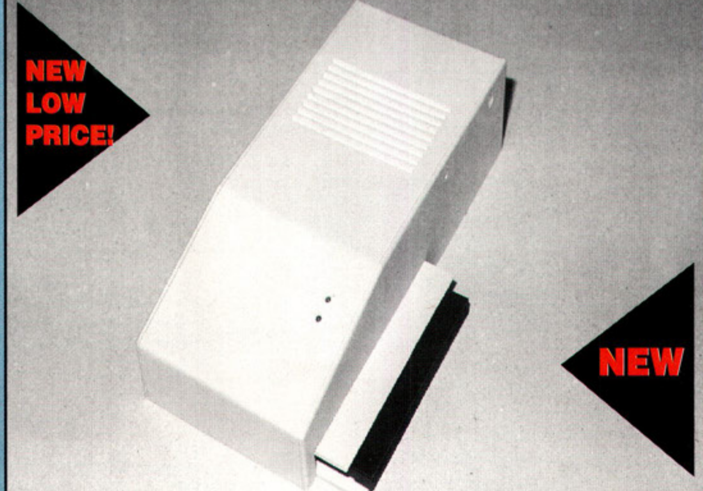
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HARWOODS MEGA GAMES PACKS ARE NOW BASED ON THE EXCITING NEW AMIGA A600 RANGE OF 1Mb COMPUTERS AND ARE ONLY AVAILABLE FROM GORDON HARWOOD COMPUTERS...'The Original Pack Specialists'

ALL OUR AMIGAS ARE UNITED KINGDOM SPECIFICATION AND INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING...

A600FD
1 Mb. Disk Drive, 1Mb RAM, Integral TV Modulator, 4096 Colours, Multi Tasking, Speech Synthesis, 4 Channel Digital Stereo Sound, Mouse. Workbench Disks & Manuals, ALL Connecting Cables, One Great Game from Commodore & Deluxe Paint III

A600HD
Spec. as above but with a 20 Mb. Hard Drive fitted.
PLEASE NOTE...
Neither the Commodore Game or Deluxe Paint III are included with the A600HD





THAT'S RIGHT HARWOODS HAVE PUT TOGETHER THE ULTIMATE AMIGA PACKS YET AGAIN... STARTING WITH THE MEGA GAMES PACK 1 WHICH INCLUDES SOME GREAT GAMES!

Just look at what you get NOW...

- **AMIGA A600FD COMPUTER WITH A FULL 1Mb. OF MEMORY**
- **THE LATEST GREAT COMMODORE GAME** - With every A600FD you can look forward to receiving a fantastic leading title supplied by CBM which periodically changes [Supplied with A600FD ONLY not A600HD's].
- **DELUXE PAINT III** [Supplied with A600FD ONLY not A600HD's]
- **TAILORED DUST COVER AND MOUSE MAT**
- **AND A SUPERB HIGH QUALITY MICROSWITCHED JOYSTICK,**
- **PLUS.... 18 MORE GREAT GAMES**, THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE...

BLOODWYCH - Fantasy role-playing game, great interaction with your computer created environment
BUBBLE+ - Help the dawdling ghost and the soap bubble, escape from the old deserted manor house
CAPTAIN BLOOD - Astonishing creatures and animated 3D graphics, this is a game you just have to play
ELIMINATOR - A progressive multi stage flying shoot 'em up, on a long winding course, survive if you can!
HOSTAGES - You must get your team and hostages out of the terrorist overrun embassy, without loss of life
JUMPING JACKSON - In a deluge of colour and sound save, the earth from sadness and melacholy music
KRYPTON EGG - A classic Breakout game, 60 screens, separated by 6 combat sequences
LANCASTER - Your mission is to fly the classic WWII bomber on its dangerous raids over enemy territiory
LOMBARD RAC RALLY - You drive your 300 bhp Sierra Cosworth through demanding stages of the rally
PURPLE SATURN DAY - Four arcade games, an exciting high speed trip into total cosmic 3D space
SAFARI GUNS - Live the African experience in an animal sanctuary, track the poachers & ivory traffickers
STIR CRAZY (Featuring Bobo) - Bobo & his inmates are planning a stunning trampoline jump prison escape
SKYCHASE - Airborne combat for every simulation fan. In this one or two player game, battle against your MIG flying adversary in your F-16 Falcon.
SKYFOX II - Skyfox II, the only ship fast enough to carry on the Skyfox legend. Fight to blow your federation enemies from the Galaxy, at speeds of 9000 kilometres/second!
STRIKE FORCE HARRIER - Puts you in the cockpit of one of Britains most exiting fighter aircraft. Multiple skill levels let you progress to become an ace pilot
TINTIN ON THE MOON - We've been captured by Colonel Jorgen and he's tring to scupper the moon mission. Come on Tintin, you're the only one who can save us, and be the first on the moon
TV SPORTS FOOTBALL - Strap on your helmet for American football simulation that looks like the real thing.
XENON 2 MEGABLAST - This time it's war! The Xenites are back and have thrown time itself into turmoil.

We reserve the right to substitute individual software titles or pack items should the need arise.

Why not have the Amiga A600HD machine with a 20Mb. Hard Drive instead of the A600FD for only £79.95 EXTRA

Amiga A500Plus machines may still be available at special prices. Please Phone!

Don't Forget... That whilst our Packs always offer superb value and are ideal for most buyers... if you wish to buy a computer without our games and/or accessories, simply call us where we will be only too pleased to offer you THE MOST COMPETITIVE UK DEAL tailored just to suit your needs.

WHY NOT ADD TEN EXTRA GAMES WHEN YOU BUY YOUR NEW AMIGA A600 FOR JUST £10!!! FANTASTIC HARWOODS VALUE!!!
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A600FD PACK Priced at an INCREDIBLE
£324.95

A600HD PACK FOR AN EXTRA...
That's right have Games Pack 1 with an Amiga A600HD with 20Mb. Hard Drive in place of the A600FD
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EXTRA Including VAT











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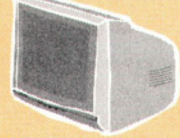
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MEGA GAMES PACK — MONITOR GAMES PACK — 2 — PACK TWO — GAMES PACK

OR...YOU CAN CHOOSE A PHILIPS MONITOR TV for just £20 EXTRA! See page 3 for FULL details of this remarkable Fast Text Monitor TV



£524.95 Including VAT

Our monitor section on page 3 gives full details for your choice of Philips Monitors & Monitor TV's

A600HD PACK 2 FOR AN EXTRA... £124.95 Extra Including VAT
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[Note...CBM Game & D Paint III NOT supplied with HD Pack]

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Our monitor section on page 3 gives full details for your choice of Philips Monitors & Monitor TV's

Plus.. **THE SUPER STAR LC 200 COLOUR PRINTER...**

185/40 cps, Full Colour 9 Pin NLQ Dot Matrix Printer with a FREE Dust Cover & cable to your Amiga *(See printer panel for details)*



OR...YOU CAN CHOOSE A PHILIPS MONITOR T for Just £20 EXTRA! See page 3 for FULL details of this remarkable Fast Text Monitor TV

£719.95 Including VAT

IF YOU WISH, REPLACE THE LC200 WITH A CITIZEN SWIFT 9 COLOUR AT NO EXTRA COST!!! OR... IF YOU PREFER A 24PIN COLOUR PRINTER, JUST CHOOSE FROM OUR RANGE & ADD THE DIFFERENCE IN PRICE BETWEEN STARS LC200 & 'YOUR CHOICE'. (eg. Citizen 224, add just £30)

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PHILIPS CM 8833/II STEREO COLOUR MONITOR
See Monitor Panel on Page 3 for Details
+
STAR LC200 9 PIN NLQ FULL COLOUR PRINTER
See Printer Panel on Page 3 for Details
+
A HOST OF BUSINESS SOFTWARE & ACCESSORIES...
PEN PAL V1.3 (Word Processor)...1Mb.
SUPERBASE II PERSONAL (Database)
SUPERPLAN (Spreadsheet)...1Mb

Plus...
- ☆ A GREAT CBM GAME
- ☆ DELUXE PAINT III Now with ANIMATION
- ☆ MICROSWITCHED JOYSTICK
- ☆ 10 BLANK 3.5" DISKS
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A600HD POWERPRO PACK FOR AN EXTRA... £124.95 Extra Including VAT
That's right have a Powerpro Pack with an Amiga A600HD with 20Mb. Hard Drive in place of the A600FD
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PRIMARY & JUNIOR PACK A

Get your children off to the right computing start with this software learn and play Compendium 6 pack...

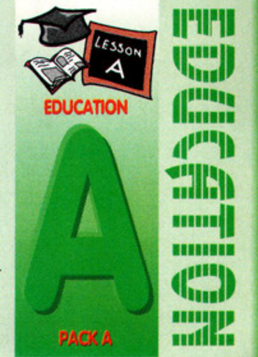
KIDS TYPE, WEATHER WATCHER, CALENDAR QUIZ, WORDS & NUMBERS, GAME SET & MATCH, WHAT IS IT ?- WHERE IS IT?

Active, enquiring young minds will love the fun of these six entertaining but educational titles. Your children probably won't even realise that their "lessons" have begun!!! .

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A fantastic word processor with all the tools you'll need to create effective written work. Ideal for home work, projects etc. or for the families letters. Text wraps automatically around graphics, even as you type! Includes a built-in database and Forms Manager.

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12 MONTH WARRANTY: Items proving faulty within 30 days of purchase are replaced with NEW UNITS unless otherwise stated. For the whole guarantee period, warranty service will be completely FREE OF CHARGE.

COLLECTION FACILITY: Any computer, monitor or printer requiring warranty service can be collected from your home FREE OF CHARGE during the guarantee period (UK Mainland only) and a FAST turnaround is GUARANTEED by our OWN ENGINEERS!

FULL TESTING PROCEDURE: All computers are tested prior to despatch, and all items are supplied with mains plug and leads as required - just connect up and use straight away.

REMEMBER WE'RE NOT JUST ANOTHER MAIL ORDER COMPANY...

All listed prices are what YOU PAY, and there are NO HIDDEN EXTRAS. VAT and postage are included, and prices are correct at time of going to press (Pack details may vary from time to time). Offers are subject to availability and to being the latest advertised packs and prices. Our offers are NOT supplied on a trial basis. E&OE.

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PRINTERS

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The Harwoods Amiga Help Bulletins provided with ALL printers get you going straight away by covering specific Workbench Set Up Parameters etc.

CITIZEN 120D+ 9 PIN MONO - Up to 120/25 cps — £134.95
- Very reliable low cost printer with interchangable interfaces for Centronics/RS232/serial type (C64 etc.)
- 2 Year manufacturers warranty

STAR LC20 9 PIN MONO - Up to 150/38 cps — £154.95
- Simultaneous, continuous and single sheet stationery, great paper handling
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- Multiple font options

STAR LC200 9 PIN COLOUR PRINTER - 185/40 cps — £199.95
- 80 Column Dot Matrix
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- 16K Buffer, 8 Fonts
- Front panel programming
- Push/pull tractor, rear/bottom feeds & Reverse paper feeds
- Micro paper feed
- Colour & mono ribbons
- Paper park with auto single sheet loading
- 12 month warranty

CITIZEN SWIFT 9 PIN COLOUR - 160/40cps — £199.95
- 8K Buffer, 4 Fonts
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- 2 Year Citizen warranty

STAR SJ48 INKJET PRINTER — £239.95
- 64 Nozzle ink jet
- Comes with AC adaptor
- Large 28K Buffer
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CANON BJ10ex NOW AVAILABLE FROM HARWOODS
A fantastic near laser quality inkjet printer [spec as SJ48 above] — £229.95

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Mono version of LC24/200 Colour, same spec except for a smaller 7K buffer

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- 80 Column Dot Matrix
- 360 dpi - 24 Pin MONO
- 30K Buffer (expandable)
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- Push/pull tractor & rear/bottom feeds
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- Supplied with mono ribbon
- Reverse paper feed
- Micro paper feed
- Program from front panel,
- No DIP switches
- 12 month warranty

NEW 24 Pin CITIZEN 224 COLOUR - 160/53 cps — £229.95
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- Complete paper parking facilities.
- Supplied with mono & colour ribbons
- Full 2 Year Citizen Warranty

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- 360 dpi - 24 Pin COLOUR
- 8K Buffer expandable to 32K
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- Supplied with mono & colour ribbons
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- Exceptional print quality
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A4 Laser Printer, will connect to PC, Amiga, Atari ST, Macintosh etc.
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CITIZEN 120D+	BLACK ONLY	£4.95	£24.95	N/A	N/A
CITIZEN 124	BLACK ONLY	£4.95	£24.95	N/A	N/A
CITIZEN SWIFT 9	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.95	£24.95	£16.95	£99.95
SWIFT 24/24E/224	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.95	£24.95	£16.95	£99.95
STAR LC10*/20☆	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.50*☆	£24.95*☆	£6.90*	£36.50*
STAR LC200	BLACK/COLOUR	£6.95 ZX9	£36.95 ZX9	£12.95 ZX9CL	£69.95 ZX9CL
STAR LC24/200	BLACK/COLOUR	£8.95 Z24	£49.95 Z24	£14.95 X24CL	£74.95 X24CL
STAR XB RANGE	BLACK/COLOUR	£8.95 Z24	£49.95 Z24	£14.95 X24CL	£74.95 X24CL
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Citizen 124D Semi-Auto SheetFeeder	£39.95
Citizen 124D Automatic Sheet Feeder	£79.95
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Citizen Swift 9X Printer Stand	£34.95
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☆Features Include ☆Long connecting cable ☆ Access Light ☆1Mb, (880K Formatted) Capacity ☆Throughport ☆Enable/Disable Switch ☆Compatible with Amiga500/600/10001500/2000/3000 and CDTV

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4Mb.	£489.95	£599.95	£869.95
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GVP AMIGA 1500/2000 HARD DRIVES

RAM SIZE	CAPACITY 52Mb.	120Mb.	240Mb.	420Mb.
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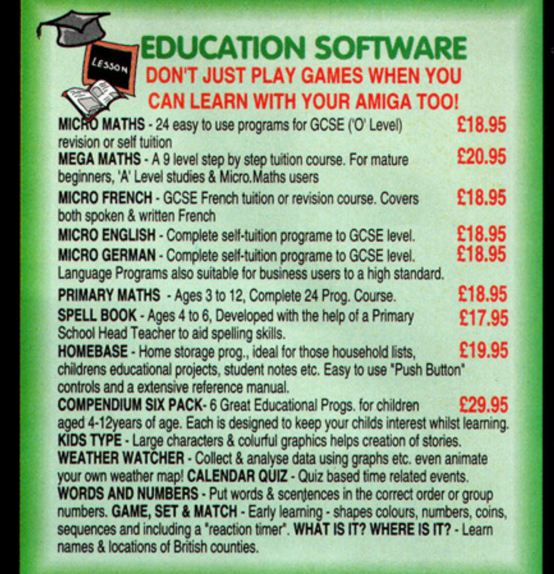
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The Amiga can put on a great presentation. **Pat McDonald** takes a look at the best program in show business

Scala MM200

Presentation software ■ £464.12 ■ Digital Vision



Scala MM200 comprises all the good bits of Scala plus the new multimedia controls that enable you to mix music, graphics, laser disc video and text into 'must see' presentations.

THE MANUAL FOR this product describes multimedia as 'lots of cables'. From a technical standpoint this is accurate, but the idea is to combine static graphics, animation, video and sound into brain-blowing presentations.

Scala MM200 (yes, the MM stands for MultiMedia) enables you to design such all-singing, all-dancing presentations, using the award winning *Scala* interface. I once described *Scala* as "...the most user-friendly software I've ever seen on an Amiga". I still haven't found anything that comes close.

Scala's secret is that it is designed for people who don't know a lot about the Amiga. Technical knowledge helps, but from the manual to the menus, *Scala* assumes that you just want to get the job done without learning tons and tons of jargon.

All the elements of previous versions of *Scala* are there – it's still the most user-friendly video titler around, and it comes with several disks stuffed with fonts, backgrounds, animations and sounds to get you started. *Scala* costs a lot of money – but there's a costlier version aimed at cable TV companies.

This multimedia solution costs money to buy, but the expense doesn't stop there. To use it at all, a hard disk and 3Mb of RAM is a minimum configuration. To use *Scala* to the full, an accelerator, 2Mb of chip RAM and *Arexx* are also vital. That cuts most A500s and all A600s out of the game.

There must be thousands of potential users out there with 1.3 A2000s, but they won't be able to use *Scala* properly either. They might have a hard disk and lots of memory – but *Arexx* is something you usually find on Workbench 2 machines only. You can buy it separately, but most people don't.

Arexx is a bit like a *Super Shell*, for running script files that control other programs. This means you can set your Amiga up to do a particular task, using many different programs, and the machine will get on and do it. One example is grabbing successive frames from a video, and storing them on disk.

Scala is not copy-protected on disk (it would be a bit pointless needing a hard disk if this was the case) but it does have a dongle as an anti-piracy measure. This is a small piece of plastic that you have to plug into the joystick port – the program will not run without it. Thankfully, the dongle has a through-port for a joystick, so you can plug your joystick into the back and forget about it. It's the best designed dongle I've ever seen!


SCALA MM200
Available from Scala UK 0920 444294

Getting this creation going is not a small task, but most of the work is in making decisions about how many of the disks you want to install on to your hard drive. You don't have to use the supplied fonts, pictures or animations – but as the numerous tutorials use them extensively, you better had.

The supplied example files are of truly excellent quality, much better than you normally get with a multimedia or graphics program. One side effect is that beginners' *Scala* creations always look the same. But if you have a paint program (*Deluxe Paint* IV being the best) then you can create your own raw material to suit.

Another included utility can be used to optimise animations for use with *Scala*. Although the files it creates cannot be used with other animation programs, they load and display faster with *Scala* than normal anims. In addition, you can resize animations between PAL-sized (Euro/Australasian) and NTSC (USA/Japan) resolutions. This is an automatic

THE CONTENDER

ShowMaker uses high-res interlace mode to show you as much as possible. Shame it flickers!

The only program that comes close to *Scala MM200* for multimedia use is *ShowMaker* from Gold Disk. *ShowMaker* can control external devices, like this program, but doesn't require *Arexx* to do so. In addition *ShowMaker* offers a control panel for the Video Toaster card from Newtek, which can do screen transitions (wipes and fades) which far surpass *Scala*'s.

However, *ShowMaker* is set up to use the American NTSC video timing frequency. If you know what you're doing, this need not be a problem, but it's very confusing to see a second split into 60ths rather than 50ths. Converting between the two can be a nightmare. Also, *ShowMaker* cannot play animations of any length like *Scala* can.

It makes sense to use the best program for your particular TV system. *Scala* looks and performs very well on European machines, which don't have a Toaster anyway. In addition it is more user friendly, and can create presentations which involve people more thanks to *Lingua*. A shame you need a souped up machine to use it!



process, saving you the hours of laborious mouse clicking and typing that it would normally take.

As you would expect, *Scala* can display Amiga IFF pictures and animations. However, it can now also display animations of virtually any length from hard drive – playing a 12Mb anim on a 3Mb Amiga is no problem. New features include playing sound samples and Amiga-based music created using *Sound Tracker*, GVP's *Sound Studio* or *SMUS*.

Scala can also control external electronic media players. The modules that do the controlling are called EXs (pronounced "eee-ecks"). Six EXs are included, and more will follow. However, they all use a serial port to communicate with outside devices. As the Amiga only has one serial port as standard, you will need a serial board stuffed with extra RS232 ports to use all EXs simultaneously.

Peripheral controllers will not play their sound or pictures directly through the Amiga. Because you have to wire all the different video signals to one monitor and all the different audio leads to one amplifier, this is where the 'lots of cables' reference comes into play. Using audio/video mixing desks helps out, but if you are using a lot of signals you will need a very expensive mixing desk.

The most novel EX module is for controlling CDTV. By connecting a null-modem cable between the Amiga running *Scala* and a CDTV, and booting the CDTV with the main *Scala* disk, you can play any track from a music CD.

Scala can control video laser-disc players (Pioneer and Sony systems). Although video laser-disc players are rare in the UK, you can get quite a selection of different graphic sequences from laser-disc libraries.

One odd feature is that *Scala* can control a Canon Ion still video camera, though if you want to do this then you'll need yet another interface for the camera.

Finally come the big two features, namely MIDI and DCTV. *Scala* enables you to play either format. MIDI is an acronym for Musical Instrument Digital Interface a system that (among other things) enables you to control compatible devices such as keyboards from the comfort of your own Amiga.

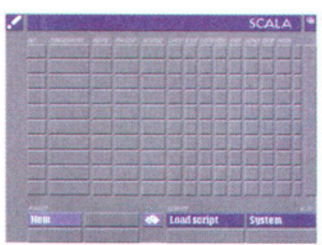
If you want to include a MIDI track within a *Scala* presentation, no problem. Well, to be honest, one music software company (Blue Ribbon) has been working with *Scala* to make sure that their software – *KCS Level II*, *XOR* and so on – works properly with *Scala*. I'm not sure about *Music X*, *Trax* or any of the other MIDI sequencers, but (in theory) they shouldn't have problems.

The other biggie is DCTV. This is a graphics card which enables you to display millions of colours on standard monitor systems. *Scala* can display DCTV animations and pictures, although you need the DCTV hardware to appreciate the pictures.

When you first start using *Scala*, it seems if anything a bit over friendly. Every time you create a script, it's saved in a special format called *Lingo* (soon to be changed to *Lingua* for European reasons). You can call *Lingua* scripts from *Arexx*, and vice versa. Too user friendly? *Lingua* is for 'real' programs – variables, GOTOs, loops and so on.

Should you buy *Scala*? It really depends on whether you have a highly specified Amiga. *Scala* is the best on such machines – other programs can do similar things, but they just don't work with the same simplicity and thoroughness that *Scala* does.

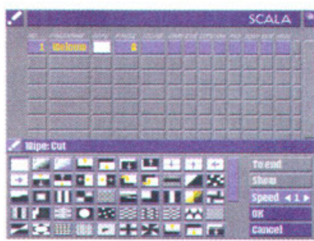
HOW SCALA MM200 WORKS



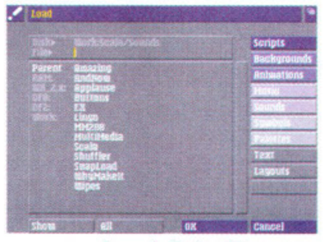
Projects are split up into many different pages. I have narrowed the columns so that you can see the EX buttons on the right – normally these are off the screen so that you only see the page name and wipe information. Working on this sort of area isn't recommended, as you can lose track of which page is which. From here, you can load an old script or start a new one. If you click on 'New', you start working on the first page.



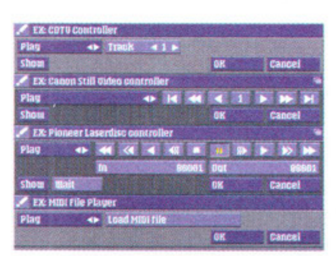
After selecting one of the many backgrounds contained within *Scala*, you can put any titles (messages) straight over it. Of course you can just have a blank screen, or even an animation. Any part of the title can be altered simply by dragging a box around it. Font type and size, colour and style – it's very easy to view the changes as you make. Small graphic brushes can easily be stamped down just where you want them.



Wipes (special effects for displaying and removing pictures) are what make *Scala* special. There are 20 new wipes on top of the traditional *Scala* types, although some of the new ones need an accelerator and/or 2Mb of chip RAM to look good. Once you have selected one, you can preview it to make sure that it looks pleasing to the eye. The speed of the transition can also be altered to taste.



This screen shows is *Scala*'s file requester, and you tend to use it a lot. When you are learning the program, it's great to be able to go to the correct directory without remembering exactly where you installed *Scala* on your hard disk. If you use your own designs or animations, it's very important not to move them about – otherwise *Scala* won't be able to find them again. Happily, there is a Show option to preview a picture or animation before you load it.



You won't see all these control panels at the same time – I've just pasted them together to save space. Each one is for controlling a different external device. The ones for controlling video will show up on your Amiga monitor if the video source is genlocked to your computer. Once you have selected the right material, *Scala* will play it a given point in your production. Now that's what I call multimedia!

Scala MM200

SPEED ●●●●
Fast enough to use, although speedy presentations need an accelerator card.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
Very good, easy to follow, with a very thorough technical reference.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
Very easy to use if your machine is powerful enough to run it.

FEATURES ●●●●
Good, with more EXs to follow – but will it control video tape players?

VALUE ●●●
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87%



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If you thought that Amiga video production just means adding a few words to your latest holiday tapes, you couldn't be more mistaken. **Gary Whiteley** adds ZVP's VideoStudio 3 to his Amiga and finds a host of features to help spice up lacklustre video images.

Video Studio 3

Video Production Software ■ £149 ■ ZVP

THERE'S NO DOUBT about it – the Amiga is the computer most widely used by video makers. So it comes as no surprise that there is plenty of video software vying for attention. One such is ZVP's collection of programs *VideoStudio 3*, which features high-resolution titling, graphics, wipes, test patterns, clocks, special effects and more. It certainly has a lot more to offer than many other titling programs, but does quantity necessarily equate with quality? Let's firmly grasp its parameters and find out.

***VideoStudio 3* can** be run from floppy disk or installed on to hard disk. However, before initial use, floppy disk users must 'install' the *VideoStudio 3* boot disk with their chosen workbench version (1.3 or 2) – it's a quite painless operation.

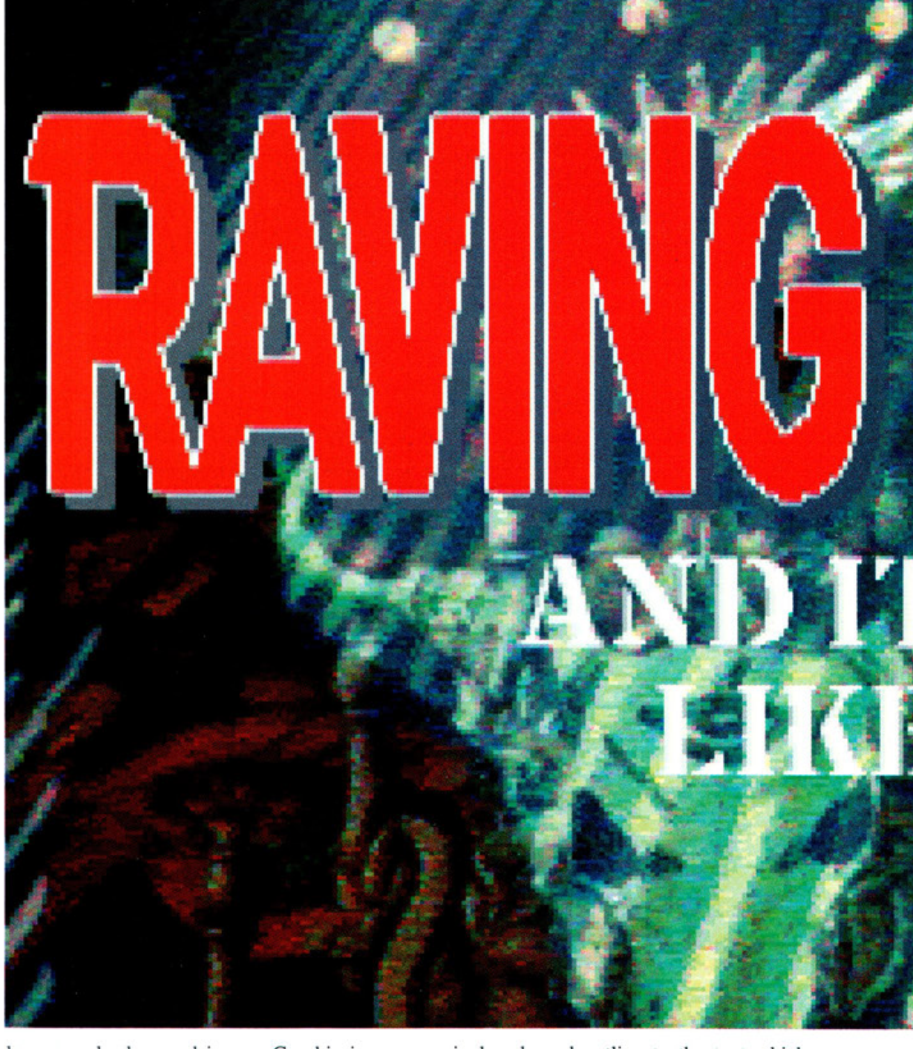
From here on, the speed at which *VideoStudio 3* runs is entirely dependent on the speed and configuration of your Amiga. I mention this because the program is written in SAMBasic (a language developed for the SAM Coupé computer), and every time a different module is run it has to be loaded from disk. This can certainly slow floppy users down. However, *VideoStudio 3*'s modular approach will benefit those with only limited amounts of RAM.

There are six parts to the package. It looks like more, but Sequence Title, Scroll Title and Subtitle all lead to the same sub-menu.

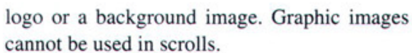
SPEEDTEXT

SpeedText is the first of two programs for preparing title and caption screens. It is a script-based editor which means that control characters for setting fonts, text placement and page gaps are typed in with the text making it possible to construct titles, subtitles and scrolls very quickly and lay them out ready for use.

A variety of easily adjustable parameters, including font colour and size, horizontal and vertical margins, centring, shadowing, outlines and style, is included. However, *SpeedText* is restricted to using eight colours, three fonts and three colour combinations, plus either a logo or a background image. Graphic images cannot be used in scrolls.



Use *VideoStudio's Captor* or *SpeedText* programs to combine a *Deluxe Paint* background (the main title) with subtext, then genlock it over video to produce titles.





***VIDEOSTUDIO 3* is available from ZVP 0268 411719**

Owners of any previous version of *VideoStudio* can upgrade to version 3 for £49.95

CAPTOR

The second program, *Captor*, has fewer constraints. It can use 16 colours, up to 12 fonts and is used for more complex, manually designed screens. Consequently it isn't as easy to use as *SpeedText*, but the results can be more creative and satisfying. Different effects, such as Shadow and Outline, can be mixed on one page and text can be shown in different colours. Line and page justification is possible, as is a crude and not entirely successful form of anti-aliasing which simply adds a single-pixel, coloured outline to the text which can then be altered for best effect.

Although *Captor* is a powerful program, with more facilities than you could shake a stick at, I wish the authors had included word wrap, hot keys, Colorfont access and compatibility with *SpeedText* files.

Both *Captor* and *SpeedText* can apply different transitions with which to polish presentations. These include cutting between pages, or the more complex Print transition which gives a Teleprinter effect as it builds up text on the screen.

Dwell times and styles can also be set to determine how the pages change – either auto-

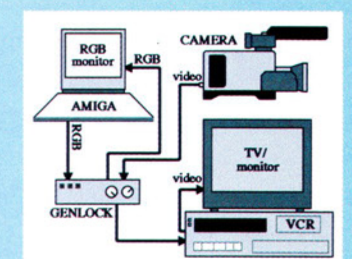
FUN WITH VIDEO

How can a program like *VideoStudio 3* be of use to you? Let's assume you've got an Amiga 500 with 1Mb of memory, and that you can also lay your hands on a camcorder, a VHS deck to use as a recorder, and a genlock. With this modest setup you won't be producing TV-quality drama, but you will be taking your first steps on the bumpy road of video post-production.

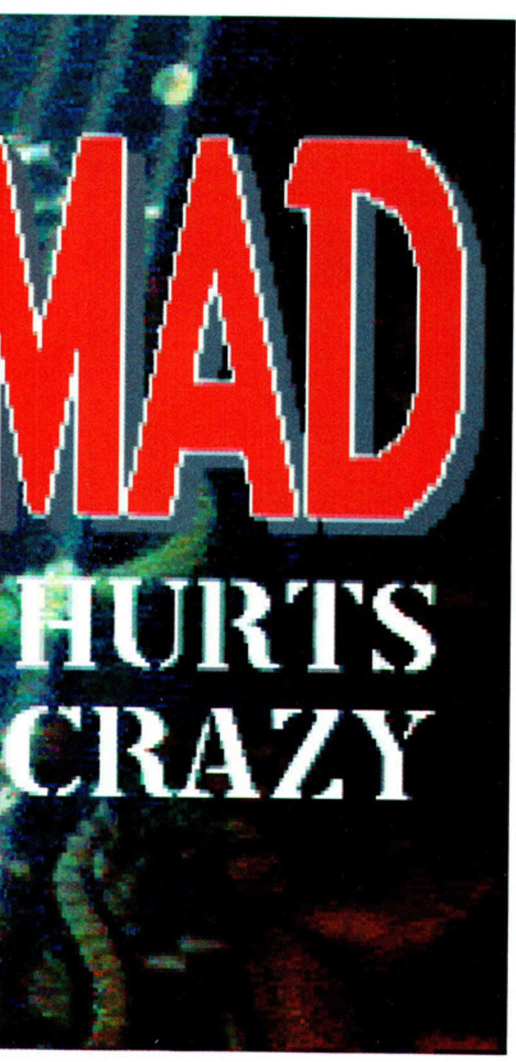
Perhaps you already have footage you want to title, or you have plans to shoot a little documentary or travelogue. Either way, as you've probably observed from TV viewing, it's far easier to use some well-chosen text on screen than it is to attract attention with a voice over. Just think how often you find yourself drawn to the subtitles of a news report, even though the announcer is actually reading in English?

Only by using a genlock can you get the best out of *VideoStudio 3*. With one of these handy video devices you can superimpose graphics, text and special devices, such as clocks, on to video, as well as producing some interesting effects, especially if the genlock has a foreground keying mode.

If the video bug really starts to bite, perhaps you should think about joining a local video group where you'll find advice aplenty at first hand.



Judging by the amount of used video equipment in circulation today, it shouldn't be hard to assemble a setup like this one for relatively little outlay.



matically or manually. Be aware that neither scroll nor crawl pages are overscanned, so text doesn't quite reach the screen edges before it appears or disappears which can sometimes be rather disconcerting.

TIME FUNCTIONS

This is a mixed set of six clock screens, all of which can be customised to suit your needs. As well as a useful Ident clock, there are digital and analogue station clocks and a couple of timing devices: a stop watch and a frame counter, neither of which seem to run accurately until several seconds have elapsed after starting. Clocks read the current time from the Amiga and can also incorporate the date, logos and other graphic information.

TEST PATTERNS

Twenty-four test patterns are provided for setting up and testing your video equipment, particularly monitor screens. All of the standard patterns are here – bars, greyscale, crosshatch, dots, colour saturation screens and combinations, including EBU, BREMA and VCR test cards. Adjustable audio output is also available.

Of course, setting up monitors with colour patterns requires prior knowledge of what the colours should really look like, otherwise the monitor could be set up any old how.

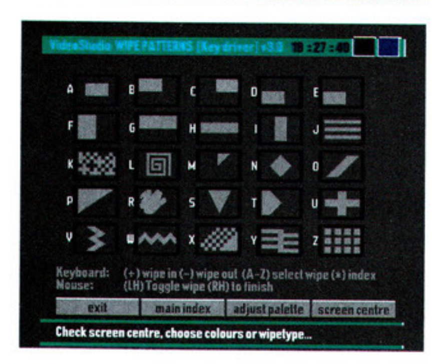
Unfortunately, I have to say that the colours used in the test patterns appear to be

ABOVE: With a wide range of useful utilities and functions which could benefit even the lowliest video user, *VideoStudio3* offers more than just titling.

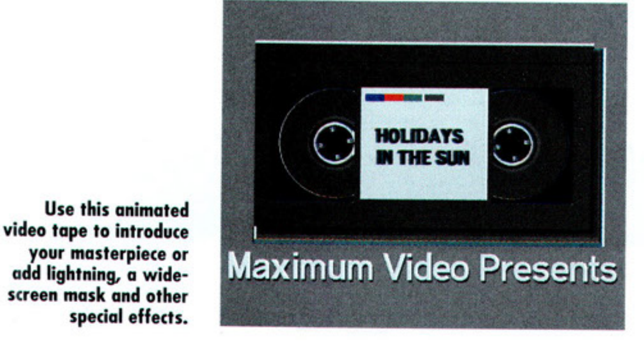


Test patterns like this one can be useful for getting the best out of your video equipment. They also look pretty damn flash.

Ident Clocks are great for recording essential details at the start of the tape – handy for both quick reference and duplication.



Wipes inject some variety into a video, though *VS3* cannot wipe from video to graphics directly. A video edit has to be made first.



Use this animated video tape to introduce your masterpiece or add lightning, a wide-screen mask and other special effects.

rather over-saturated compared with the real thing and any setups relying on these colour patterns should be taken with a pinch of salt.

WIPES

Twenty-five plain coloured wipes are included and can be used as intermediates between video and graphics during video editing. They can also be fed to any vision mixer which has a key input to provide an extended wipe capability. They cannot be used to wipe from video to graphics directly – that's really the job of a vision mixer.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Twenty-seven graphics, animation and other effects are also provided so you can add a spot of variety to a video production. They range from oval vignettes and wide-screen masks to gameshow-type scoring and countdown screens. There are also some animated wipe/graphic effects which can be used to introduce new subjects or for trick shots. A genlock with foreground keying is required to fully utilise some of the effects.

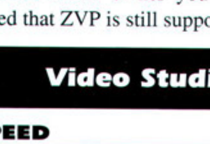
In case you're curious about how so many features have been crammed on to just two discs, it's because *VideoStudio 3* uses software to produce many of its screens, rather than using bulky IFF picture files.

While there's no denying that the package is packed to the gills with features, my impression is that, at times, quantity has taken preference over quality.

More high-quality fonts and more colours would be preferable. And correcting the nagging lack of particular overscan screens would also help. In their defence, ZVP (who, incidentally, provide excellent telephone support) say that, as the majority of established *VideoStudio* users have basic Workbench 1.3 A500s with only 1Mb RAM and single floppy drives, there will inevitably have to be compromises – especially in screen size and colours. However, upgrades will still run on their machines.

If you own a more powerful Amiga you won't get an improved performance from *VideoStudio 3*. In fact, you may suffer unduly if you have Workbench2.*X*, but if you are a confirmed A500 owner you can at least be assured that ZVP is still supporting you.





Video Studio 3

SPEED ●●●
Not bad, considering *VideoStudio*'s SAMBasic programming and its modular format.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
Good, chatty, informative and presentable.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●
Could be awkward for novices, but generally well interfaced.

FEATURES ●●●●
More than most people will ever need.

VALUE ●●●
Below-par text quality for the price, though you do get a lot of features for your money.



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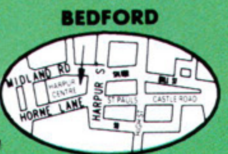
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KCS Power PC Board

PC Emulation on your Amiga

About...

The KCS Power PC is a complete 11MHz 1Mb PC sub-system that can be fitted to any Amiga in minutes.
Based around NEC's highly successful V30 CPU, the Power PC Board offers a very high degree of compatibility at machine language level, yet runs faster than an equivalent Intel 8086.
The 1Mb of Autoconfig™ memory can be accessed by all current Amiga models including the A500 Plus. Even the original A500 can access 512K as a standard expansion with clock; plus a 512K RAM disk.
Adored by critics and users alike, the KCS Power PC Board is a real alternative to buying a complete PC clone.

Installation

The KCS Power PC board fits to any Amiga in minutes:
- On A500 and A500 Plus machines it simply slides into the trapdoor expansion; and doesn't invalidate your warranty!
- On bigger Amigas, such as the 1500/2000/2500/3000, it drops into a vacant Amiga slot using the custom designed adaptor board.
- Once fitted, your Amiga can be switched into PC mode simply by clicking an icon. Just reset and it's an Amiga again.

No fuss, no hassle. Just two machines in the space of one.

Video

- Supports the majority of EGA and VGA modes in 16 glorious colours and monochrome – graphics up to 640x480 and text too. Interlace is required for some modes but a software flicker fixer is built in.
- Other video modes include MDA and CGA text and graphics. Also supports Tandy colour graphics adaptor and Hercules monochrome.
- EGA and VGA graphics can be displayed on a domestic TV or monitor. Unlike *real* PCs, no extra hardware is required.

Disk

- Up to four Amiga drives can be connected to your system and accessed in PC modes as 3.5" 720K or 5.25" 360K. Typical disk access is at least twice as fast as most real PC clones!
- DOS can be started from any mounted drive 5.25" or 3.5" and most Amiga hard drives.
- Supports most popular hard disks including GVP Impact, Supra and A590 (Omil and SCSI).
- A massive 200K ramdrive (up to 8Mbwith expansion) is available in PC mode and it's PC-reset proof too.

Memory

- Even with a base Amiga 704K is free for DOS programs (640K in EGA and VGA modes).
- EMS (expanded memory) is supported allowing you to run Microsoft Windows without problems and store massive files in Lotus 1-2-3. So, if you have 8Mb on board, the PC can use it.
- XMS (extended memory) is supported – even though this is not usually possible on NEC V30 machines.

Speed

Its Landmark speed puts it way ahead of many true PC systems – it even compares favourably with many AT clones.
However, the crux of the matter lies with the video speed; and this, as many critics have noted is where the KCS Power PC Board scores over all others. It's no use having a wizz-bang processor if the screen takes several seconds to redraw itself.
- Tests in text modes have shown it is several times faster than evenAT clones with dedicated video hardware. Even in graphics modes, it's no slouch although the emulation is limited by Amiga hardware.
- Add a processor accelerator card, andthe 32-bit clean KCS cache software will use it to its full advantage.

Mouse

- Automatic serial mouse emulation is supplied as standard – using your existingAmiga rodent.
- Mouse can be configured as COM1 or COM2.

Joystick

- Up to two sticks can be employed at any time. You decide how they are arranged.

Printer

- Your Amiga's parallel port is accessed as LPT1 in PC mode.

Serial

- DOS usually supports two serial ports, but one is taken by the Amiga mouse. The Amiga's serial can be set as COM1 or COM2 as desired, ie for MODEM etc. up to 19200 baud full-duplex.

Sound

- PC sound is supported, but there's an additional volume control available in software.

Works on...

- All Amigas (except the a1000) fitted with Kickstart 1.2 and Workbench 1.2 or higher.
- Extra memory is not required, but full use will be made of extra hardware, like accelerators, flicker fixers, modems etc.

Help!

- We want you to get the most out of your system so we offer a comprehensive, free telephone helpline service to all registered users.

Updates...

- Since the hardware is a complete PC in its own right, all updates are completely software driven. Registered users can update at any time for a nominal fee to cover media and shipping costs.

"PC emulation is a contentious issue – but the KCS Power PC board is the only one to carry my personal recommendation. It is an excellent product that does all it claims and does it well."– ***comments Mark Smiddy, co-author of Mastering AmigaDOS 2.***

PRICE

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The House That XCad Built

The above building was designed by Architect David Bishop, modelled by XCad and rendered with Imagine.

XCad

SPEED - An Amiga 600 is 6 times faster on zoom and redraw than AutoCAD running on a fast '386.

PRACTICALITY - Ideal for design in architecture, electronic and/or mechanical engineering.

COMPATIBILITY - AutoCAD DXF import/export comes complete across the XCad range. Print to plotters, laser or dot-matrix printers.

MODULAR - Simple upgrade from XCad 2000 to XCad 3000.

XCad harnesses the incredible power of the Amiga to deliver a draughting tool to beat all others. Processing times are cut to a fraction of most PC based systems. Plans, designs and blueprints can easily be produced using simple, flexible menus or commands.

The XCad range starts from as little as £129 for XCad 2000 (1Mb RAM minimum) which includes both 2D Detailing and 3D Modelling plus automatic perspective views.

Imagine

The 24 bit image above was completely originated on an Amiga computer. The drawings were designed with XCad, the 3D model was created from the 2D drawings and the 24 bit image (1280 x 1024 resolution) was rendered with Imagine - in fact this whole article was put together using Professional Page, XCad and Imagine. These Amiga products would amount to £777 (RRP), compared to AutoCAD, 3D Studio and Ventura on a PC which comes in at £5100 - and that's just for the software! Imagine 2.0 has a retail price of £269.

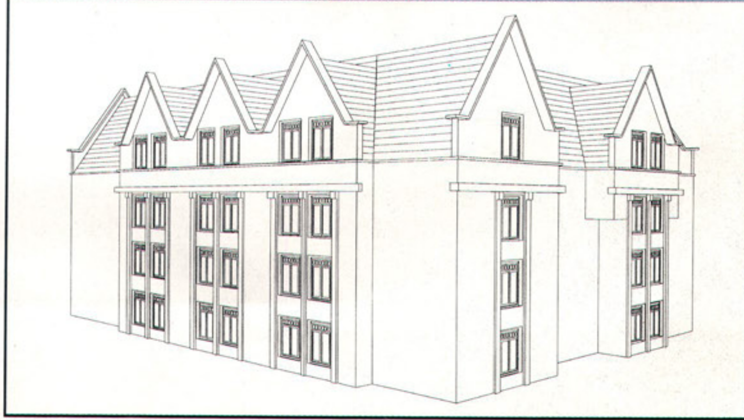
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We interrupt this magazine... AMIGA FORMAT ...to bring you another one AMIGA SHOPPER

I've been asked to introduce Amiga Shopper to you. Starting just on the right, and carrying on for the next 10 pages, is a sample edition of Britain's favourite 'serious' Amiga magazine.

It's there so you can see what you think and, if it appeals, get hold of a copy of the real thing. It only costs £1.50, so it's the ideal way to treat yourself when you've read all of this month's **Amiga Format**!

Amiga Shopper, which is produced by Future Publishing (the company behind **Amiga Format)** is very much our 'sister magazine'. In fact, its first editor was Bob Wade, who left the editor's chair at **Amiga Format** to set it up.

It takes an unusual, if not unique, angle on covering Amiga affairs: it refuses point-blank to get involved in games and games playing. Similarly, it eschews the colourful, glossy look of this magazine and prefers a back-to-basics approach: it's about no-nonsense, raw information.

There are two things that Amiga Shopper believes are of paramount importance: detailed, in-depth reviews; and answers to your questions. It will review a program in as many pages as it takes to cover every angle, and that's true for any kind of Amiga software with the exception of games: DTP, graphics, music, word processing, business, utilities and all the rest too. And it's big on intensive hardware tests, too.

The Amiga Answers section is a massive technical help area, aiming to answer every question you can hrow at them. Even if you haven't written in with a question yourself, it's a gold mine of information on all aspects of Amiga software and hardware. That's why they say 'If you want our advice - buy it!'

Of course, **Amiga Format** covers all this stuff too. But if you're the sort of person who always wants more; Amiga Shopper will deliver - with no frills, no fuss and no severe pocket-damage.

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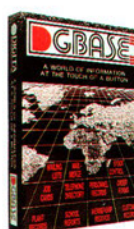




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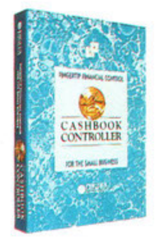
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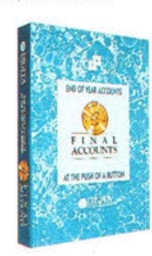


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AMIGA SHOPPER

YOUR DEFINITIVE AMIGA GUIDE

Each and every issue *Amiga Shopper* is packed full of the facts to help you make the most of your machine. Whether you're into graphics or video, desktop publishing or programming, public domain or comms, there's something here for every Amiga user.

Here's a run-down of the subjects you can regularly expect to find:

- AmigaBasic
- AmigaDOS
- AMOS
- ARexx
- Artificial Intelligence
- Bulletin boards
- Business software
- Buying advice
- C
- Chaos
- Comms
- Desktop publishing
- Education
- Graphics
- Listings
- MIDI
- Multitasking
- Music
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- Programming
- Public domain
- Shareware
- User Groups
- Video

– all crammed into over 150 pages for only £1.50! Not bad eh? But that's not all! There's also the sharpest news and liveliest letters pages in the business, stacks of advice, tutorials, comparative reviews and, best of all, our unrivalled *Amiga Answers* section.

So what should you be looking out for in the months ahead? Here's the main features we have planned for the next 3 issues:

- **NOVEMBER –** on sale October 1st
  Which PC emulator?
  Tomorrow's Amigas
- **DECEMBER –** on sale November 5th
  Ink Jet and Laser printers
  Accelerators round-up
- **JANUARY –** on sale December 3rd
  How to write Assembler
  Desktop video made easy

DEFINITELY WORTH IT!

WELCOME

So you must be thinking 'Oi!, what's this doing stuck here in the middle of my favourite Amiga mag?' Well, the reason's straightforward enough. We want to remind you there's another Amiga magazine that's well worth shelling out the dosh for – and that mag is *Amiga Shopper.*

Our brief is quite simple. We're here to help you make the most of your Amiga by providing you with tips, advice and tutorials on a whole range of subjects. Just take a look at the list on the left to see the areas we regularly cover. And take a look over the next few pages to see how we go about handling them.

So why else should you check us out? Could it be the 20 pages or so of readers' problems we solve each month? Or is it the type-in programs we print that'll help save you time and trouble? Or could it be our up to date news coverage? It's all of these and more.

But most of all it's great value – sure there's no cover-mounted disks and no glossy colour but there are over 150 fact-packed pages, for only £1.50, written by some of the best names in the business. And that's got to be worth the price of a pint! So why not give it a whirl? You'll be surprised at what you've been missing.

Okay that's enough of the soft sell, now let's get on with the free supplement. Hope you enjoy it and find it useful – and hope to see you soon!

Andy Stoner

Editor

CONTENTS



TWO MORE REASONS TO BUY AMIGA SHOPPER

PUBLIC DOMAIN WORLD

There are thousands of Amiga programs which are available for little more than the price of a disk. And many more which allow you to try the software free before you buy. Each month in Public Domain World we examine the best of these programs and explain how to get hold of them.

In our October issue, at a newsagents near you, we focus on a new PD word processor, a desktop harpsichord and a great set of new CLI utilities.

AMIGA ANSWERS

Every month we devote anything up to 20 pages to answering a 100 readers' problems and queries. Even if the problem's not one you've personally encountered, *Amiga Answers* is still a valuable source of information for future reference. Our panel of experts specialise in DTP, printers, graphics, video, AmigaDos, memory, music, programming and hard drives - and there's nothing they don't know!

We don't just review products – we take 'em apart, explain how they work and show you how to use them most effectively!

HARD DRIVES: EVERYTHING *you need to know*

TYPES OF HARD DRIVE

You may think that all hard drives are equal, but this is not the case... Although they may look and work in a similar fashion, there are many types of drive available ranging from SCSI and AT-IDE drives to real dodos such as the ST-506 drive. When making your decision, it's important to check that the hard drive uses either AT-IDE or (better still) SCSI. Although AT-IDE and SCSI compare well, SCSI gets the vote because it is far more versatile. A SCSI-equipped Amiga will be able to take advantage of such things as CD-ROM drives, tape streamers (a recommended purchase for anyone who owns a hard drive with a capacity of over 100Mb) and laser printers. If the drive is not SCSI or AT-IDE then steer well clear.

Watch out too for XT-IDE drives. These first generation drives were used briefly in the A590 until Commodore switched to SCSI drives. Although they may sound similar to AT-IDE, XT-IDE drives are real dogs.

SPEED DEMON

If you buy a SCSI drive, then you can be reasonably sure that the drive will operate at a very acceptable speed, but some other types of drive can be rather snail-paced, especially if they are pre-formatted under OFS.

When checking through the specification of a drive in an advert, don't get blinded by science. The manufacturers may reel off a whole list of speed-related statistics (access times etc), but the most important number you should check is the data transfer rate. This is the rate at which the drive sends and receives data from the Amiga. Most modern SCSI-based drives offer transfer rates ranging from 800 to 1,200K per second. If the transfer rate is lower than this figure, then steer clear.

Even data transfer ratings can be rather deceptive. Another important factor which will affect your drive's speed is its controller. If you have a slow controller, the transfer rate will be slow regardless of how fast the drive is. There are two types of controller on the market – DMA and non-DMA drives. Although DMA drives are technically better, these can cause problems with processor accelerator cards. If you need a processor card, your best bet is one of the new 'combo' cards which include both a DMA SCSI controller and processor accelerator in one box. Such an 'off the shelf' solution ensures compatibility.

Non-DMA controllers are often as fast as DMA controllers, but they can occasionally slow the machine down during intensive disk access because they use the Amiga's processor to shift data to and from the drive. It has to be said though that this sort of bus contention is unusual. They do have the benefit of being generally more compatible with such things as processor cards.

JARGON BUSTING • JARGON BUSTING

Hard drives and their technology can be hard work, even for the experts. But this should stop them baffling you with technical rhubarb...

Controller – Hard drives consist of two items – the hard drive itself which stores all your data and a hard drive controller. The hard drive controller is a piece of circuitry which enables the Amiga to control the generic hard drive. All Amiga hard drives have these as standard.

OFS – If your chosen hard drive is formatted under OFS (Old Filing System) then reformat the thing immediately. The OFS is the filing system used on early hard drives and it's slow and rather unreliable.

FFS – The latest filing system for hard drives (and now floppy drives under Workbench 2.04). Introduced with Workbench 1.3, FFS (Fast Filing System) is about 10 times faster than OFS and much more reliable. FFS also allows hard disk partitions of up to 2 gigabytes (that's 2,048 Mb!).

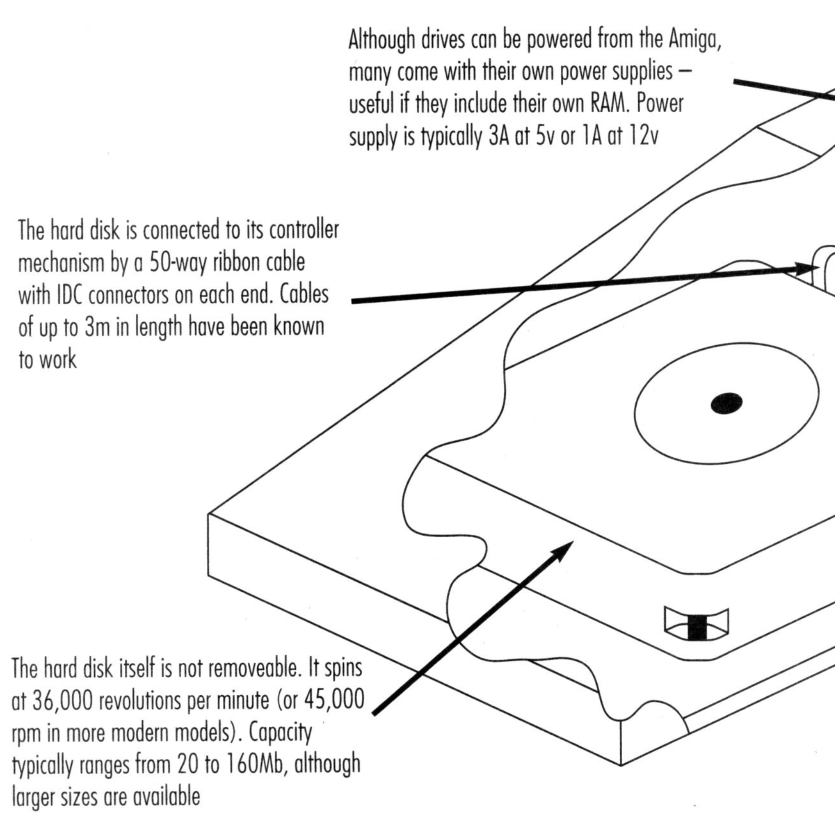
Partition – Hard drives can be divided up into two or more separate partitions and, for the Amiga, each is a hard drive in its own right. A drive is partitioned in order to keep it organised.

Prep – Before you can format a drive, it must first be 'prepped' (prepared). Prepping tells the drive how big it is, the interleave factor, filing system type (OFS or FFS), where the bad blocks are and so on.

Head Parking – Parking a hard drive moves the drive's heads to a park cylinder where it is in no danger of scratching the disk's surface. Always park a drive before switching off.



7 ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR EASY HARD DRIVING...



1 Buying the beast

If you intend to buy a hard disk from a mail order company it's very important that you learn to spot the best deals from adverts in magazines such as Amiga Shopper. Follow these simple guidelines and you won't go far wrong...

1 The safest and simplest way to buy from a mail order company is with a credit card. This gives you a certain amount of insurance – if the company goes bust, you can claim your money back from the credit card company.

2 Always check that prices quoted include VAT and delivery charges. A drive may seem cheap, but these extras could make it more expensive than the competition.

3 Warranties are very important indeed. Virtually all products include at least a year's warranty, but more is better. If an extended warranty is offered, then take it.

4 If your knowledge of hard drives is rather limited, make sure you buy your drive from a company that offers a technical support help-line. These companies will have trained staff on hand to help you if something goes wrong – a big advantage.

You'll find jargon busting boxes like the one above in all Amiga Shopper's reviews, tutorials and answers pages

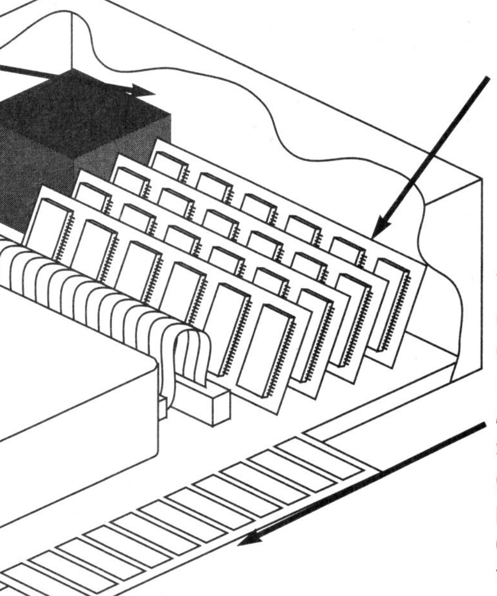
HARD DRIVES about buying a hard drive...

Setting up your hard drive



Virtually all hard drives come pre-prepped and formatted, and with a copy of the Workbench files already installed...

However, you may want to change the organisation of the drive yourself (add a couple of partitions, for example). If this is the case, you will almost certainly have to reformat the drive thereby losing its contents. Thankfully virtually all hard drives come with some form of set-up software which will take you through this process as painlessly as possible. If the drive you buy doesn't have this all-important software, then contact the suppliers immediately and ask them to send you a copy. If they don't, send the drive back and demand a refund. Once you've got the disk, make a back-up copy and keep both in a very safe place.



Many drives have space for memory to be added. This is usually in the form of SIMM chips, which are available as 1Mb or 4Mb chips. A maximum of 8Mb can be added, but only if the 4Mb chips are used

The edge-connector by which the drive is attached to an Amiga 500. It provides direct access to the pins of the Amiga's 68000 processor, and hence to the Amiga's internal memory. This enables some drives to use Direct Memory Access, greatly speeding up data transfer since the processor need not become involved. Some drives come with an edge connector pass-thru, but these are notoriously unreliable

3 ORGANISING YOUR DRIVE

It's easy to keep track of the contents of a floppy drive, but hard drives are a different ball game because of their sheer size.

Before you use a drive, it's important to consider its organisation so it's easier to keep track of its contents.

By far the best way to organise a drive is to start by splitting it into a series of partitions – for example, one for Workbench files, another for your programs, and another for all your files. Think carefully about the size of each partition. You will almost certainly want a Workbench partition of at least 3Mb in size – although 1Mb will hold the standard Workbench disk, you'll almost certainly want to add extra fonts and system libraries at a later date so you'll need the extra room.

You can then subdivide each partition by creating directories which contain certain types of programs or files – one directory for paint packages, another for picture files etc. Another good idea is to try and keep the root directory of a partition (the first directory you see when you click on the drive's disk icon) as clear as possible. If you can, restrict the root directory to drawer icons only, each labelled clearly so you know exactly what they contain.

Before the worst comes to the worst and you lose a file, get your hands on a 'Find File' utility. Readily available within the public domain, a Find File program will search your hard drive for a named file (if you can remember what you called it!) and tell you where it can be found.

MEMORY MATTERS



Most hard drives available these days offer far more than just extra storage space. Take 'combo' drives, for instance...

A combo drive will often include sockets for adding extra RAM to your machine. You may already have some form of RAM expansion, but these drives are still a good idea, because they offer more storage plus expansion RAM in one tidy box – with no unnecessary spaghetti.

Most drives come with provision for up to 8Mb of RAM as standard – the GVP Impact Series II, for example.

When purchasing the drive though, always check with the supplier to see how much it will cost to add RAM to the drive and, just as important, whether the RAM chips which the drive will need are widely available. Some of the newer drives use high capacity SIMM chips and at the moment these are rather hard to get hold of, so always check before committing yourself.

In the case of GVP, the company now markets a hard drive which includes not only a RAM expansion, but also a processor accelerator and a slot which enables you to add extra boards (such as PC emulators) and connect them internally without invalidating your Amiga's warranty – a point worth bearing in mind.

Combo cards of this kind are a good idea because they guarantee that the add-ons they provide will be mutually compatible.

Pass-thru connector



If you want to add RAM expansion, a utility cartridge (such as Datel's Action Replay), or a video digitiser...

Make sure that the drive you buy offers a pass-thru connector. If it doesn't, you'll have to juggle continuously between the hard drive and your other peripherals. Not only is this a real pain, but it can also cause wear and tear on both the drive and your add-ons.

DRIVE CAREFULLY



Hard drives can be reliable – providing that you follow these simple rules...

1 Never turn the Amiga or the hard drive off when the hard drive is in operation. Always wait until all disk activity has ceased.

2 If the drive offers head parking, get into the habit of parking the drive before switching it off. Although most modern SCSi drives will park the heads automatically as soon as you switch off, it is much safer to do this manually so that you are sure that all disk activity has ceased.

3 Never stack disks and paperwork on top of the drive. Air must circulate around the drive, otherwise it could overheat, and cause serious damage.

4 Keep the drive away from sources of vibration such as old-fashioned line, and dot matrix, printers, hi-fi speakers and real rumblers like tumble dryers. Vibrations can cause a 'head crash' – ultra-bad news!

Back-up and survive



Hard drives are usually pretty reliable but don't just trust to luck...

When they do crash (note: we didn't say if) you will lose some if not all of your data. To stop such a catastrophe wrecking your life, you would be well advised to invest in a hard disk back-up program such as *QuarterBack 5* or *Ami-Back*.

A hard disk back-up program will enable you to save the contents of any partition out to a series of floppy disks which can then be kept in a safe place. Then, should your drive happen to fail, it can be reformatted and then have its data restored to it from your floppies.

Admittedly, backing up a hard disk is time consuming and will use up a lot of disks – typically one disk for every megabyte of hard disk data. But you should put some time aside, at least once a month, to back up anything important.

But it's not just hardware that gets the in-depth focus – we apply it to all the latest software too

Let us help you make that hassle disappear...

Realise your printing potential:

Learn how to get the best results from your printer with this guide to the Amiga's printer preferences

By far the most popular peripheral for the Amiga is a printer, but it can also be the source of much frustration. Unless you know exactly what you are doing, getting a printer to work correctly with all your Amiga applications is a task that would test the patience of a saint. With our guide to the Amiga's printer preference programs though, you'll be able to get great printouts from even the naffest of printers.

Unlike the previous release of Workbench, the Amiga Preferences in 2.04have been split into a number of individual programs, each of which handles a specific setup task. For printers, there are two programs – Printer and PrinterGFX – both of which can be found within the 'Prefs' drawer on your Workbench disk. These two programs tell the Amiga which printer driver you wish to use and other more specific details such as the type of graphic printout (colour or mono, for example) and the type of paper to be used.

Once you understand all the options that these two Preference programs offer, setting up and using a printer becomes far simpler. So read on and find out how to improve the quality of your printouts...

1 Printer type: each time you load up the printer preference program, the Amiga scans the directory Devs:Printers and displays a list of printer drivers it finds within this window. To select the driver you require, simply scan through this list until you find the driver and then click on it with the mouse pointer.

2 Printer driver: this single line string gadget contains the name of the printer driver currently selected. If you click on a new printer driver from the list above this gadget, the name will be changed to reflect your choice.

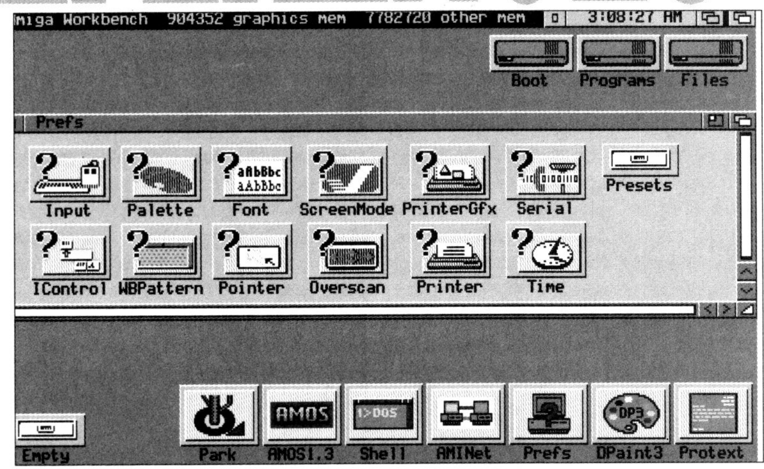
Driving you up the wall?

By far one of the most frustrating aspects of getting a printer to work with the Amiga is the good old printer driver, that all important file that will either give you a perfect printout or just a jumbled mess. The printer driver is very important because it acts as a sort of mediator between the Amiga and your printer. Although all Amiga printer drivers can understand the Amiga, they are bilingual only – that is, they can only talk to one particular type of printer. If you use the wrong printer driver, all you'll get is garbage.

The latest release of the Amiga's operating system (Workbench 2.04) includes a whole host of printer drivers which can be found on the Extras disk in a directory hidden away from Workbench called Devs. Inside this directory is another directory called Printers which – not surprisingly – contains all those lovely printer drivers. Although you usually can't see them, they'll come into view if you select 'Show All Files' from the 'Window' menu on the Workbench. If the range of drivers available doesn't seem to cover your own printer, check to see whether your printer offers any emulation options. Most dot matrix printers offer EpsonX (for 9-pin printers) or EpsonQ (for 24-pin printers) at the very least. If this is the case, then use the appropriete driver.

Laser printers are a far more contentious issue. If the laser you are using is Postscript compatible only, then it cannot be driven by standard Amiga printer drivers. Instead, you must use software that directly supports the Postscript standard (*ProPage 3*, for example). Most non-Postscript printers do usually offer both EpsonX and HP LaserJet compatability, and drivers are available on the Extras disk for both of these.

Once you've located the driver you need, you will have to copy it across onto your Workbench disk and place it into the Devs:Printers directory. You must then instruct the Amiga to use this driver by selecting it from within the 'Printer' program in your Workbench 'Prefs' drawer.



Inside the Prefs drawer you'll find a number of programs specifically designed to handle particular aspects of setting up the Amiga Workbench. The programs 'Printer' and 'PrinterGFX' are used to install a printer

3 Printer port: this single toggling gadget selects which port the Amiga should use to communicate with your printer. If you are using a serial printer, then click on this gadget until the word 'Serial' appears. If you are using a parallel printer then this gadget should read 'Parallel'. If this gadget is set incorrectly, then the Amiga will send printer data to the wrong port.

4 Paper type: if you have to manually feed each sheet of paper into your printer, then this gadget should read 'Single'. If, on the other hand, you are using either continous listing paper or your printer is able to automatically load single sheet paper from a sheet feeder, then click on the gadget until it reads 'FanFold'.

5 Paper size: this gadget tells the Amiga the dimensions of the paper that you will be feeding through your printer. If you are using conventional A4-sized single sheet paper, then click on this gadget until it reads 'DIN A4'. For continuous listing paper, this gadget should be set to 'Narrow Tractor'.

6 Paper length: this gadget dictates how many lines of text are printed on a single sheet of paper. This value not only depends on paper size, but also the line spacing (see 10). For standard A4-sized paper, this value should be set to 70 for 6 lpi (lines per inch) and 93 for 8 lpi. For the other four page sizes, the paper length should be 66 for 6 lpi and 88 for 8 lpi.

7 Left margin: the left margin setting specifies how far from the left hand edge of the paper printing should start. This figure is specified in characters. But most of the time this setting should be set to 1.

8 Right margin: the right margin value dictates how many characters across the page the printer will print. The value that you enter here depends entirely upon the pitch setting (see 9). For a pitch setting of 10 cpi (characters per inch), this value should be no greater than 82 for standard A4. For 12cpi it should be no greater than 98 and no greater than 123 for 15cpi.

9 Print pitch: the print pitch gadget sets the horizontal size of the characters the printer will use. Most printers offer three pitch sizes – 10 cpi (normal), 12 cpi (skinny) and 15 cpi (very skinny). 10cpi is usually used for standard letters but 15cpi can come in very handy for printing program listings, for example.

10 Print spacing: this dictates the size of the gap between lines. A value of 6 lpi (lines per inch) is the default, but 8 lpi will give you more lines of text per page.

11 Print quality: if you are intending to print lots of letters to the bank manager, then this gadget should be set to 'Letter'. This will instruct the printer to use NLQ (near letter quality) fonts. However, for something like program listings, the 'Draft' setting will be more than adequate.

Want to improve your printing even further? – then check out our monthly DTP series too...

This is just one of the areas where we take up where the manual leaves off...

PRINTER PREFERENCES take control...

12 Color correct: if you don't have a colour printer – ignore this. What this option does is to try and match the colours that you see on your Amiga screen with your colour printout. To be perfectly honest though, you should leave the three R, G and B boxes empty (they'll have a tick in them if they are selected) unless the colours that you're getting are horrendously bad. Experimentation is the only way to get the best results from this option.

13 Smoothing: as its name suggests, the smoothing option attempts to smooth out the jaggies between pixels on diagonal lines. Although this option works particularly well with programs that output text as a screen dump (*Wordworth* and *PenPal* are examples) it also slows down the printing speed and the results aren't always great. For standard graphic printouts though, this option is best turned off.

14 Left offset: the left offset option dictates how far the picture will start from the left hand corner of the paper (expressed in inches). If you select 'Centre Picture' the picture will be placed in the centre of the page therefore overriding (and ghosting) the value in the 'Inches / 10 ' string gadget.

15 Dithering: dithering attempts to create the illusion of more colours, or shades of grey, when a colour image is printed. The three options available – 'Halftone', 'Floyd-Steinberg' and 'Ordered' use different patterns. On the whole, 'Halftone' gives the best results (especially for grey scale printouts).

16 Scaling: the scaling option controls the overall size of the printout. If the scaling option is set to 'Integer', each pixel within the printout will be printed as an even number of dots. The integer setting is best used when printing images that have lots of straight horizontal and vertical lines. Most of the time though, the 'Fraction' is fine.

17 Image: the image setting gadget can toggle between 'Positive' and 'Negative'. If positive is selected, black will be printed as black and white as white. Naturally enough, if 'Negative' is selected, colours are reversed (black is printed as white and white as black). Negative printing can be useful for programs such as *GB Route* that dump screens containing lots of black to the printer. Print these large areas of black as white and your printer ribbon will last a lot longer.

18 Aspect: the aspect value controls whether the image will be printed in portrait or landscape format. Landscape printing will give a larger printout because the image is turned through 90 degrees.

19 Shade: the shade gadget tells the Amiga both the type of printer you have (colour or mono) and how screendumps should be printed. If you have a mono printer, this should be set to 'Grey Scale'. For colour printers though, this should be set to (not surprisingly) 'Color'. Also available is 'Black and White' (useful only for line art) and 'Grey Scale 2' (very little use unless you have a high resolution A2024 monitor).

20 Threshold: the threshold setting is only used when the shade setting is set to 'Black and White'. This dictates which colours are printed as black and which as white. The higher this value, the more colours are printed as black.

21 Density: the density setting dictates the resolution (dots per inch) at which the printer will print a screendump. Generally the higher the density, the better quality the printout. However, higher density printing can also produce rather dark printouts on dot matrix printers so with one of these you're best advised to keep the density setting at about 4 unless you're lucky enough to own a laser printer – in which case it should be set to the maximum resolution).

22 Limits type: the limits type gadget controls the overall size of the image. If the type is set to 'Ignore', the image size is controlled by the application you are currently running.

When set to 'Bounded', the picture's size is bounded by the values set within the Limits Width and Height string gadgets.

If 'Absolute' is selected, the image will be printed at the absolute size specified by the two limit values. This option completely overrides the aspect ratio and can produce rather distorted images.

Selecting 'Pixels' produces similar results to 'Absolute' but the height and width values are taken as pixels rather than tenths of an inch.

Finally, if 'Multiply' is selected, the width and height values are used as multiplying factors. That is, if the width value is 2 then the outputted image will be twice as wide. If it is 4, it will be four times as wide etc. Most of the time though, the limits type should be set to 'Ignore'.

23 Limits width: this value limits the image's horizontal size in tenths of an inch or (if Limits Type is set to 'Multiply') a multiple of this.

24 Limits height: like the limits width option, the limits height option limits the image's vertical size in tenths of an inch or as a multiplication factor.

25 Cancel: if you make any changes that you're not happy with, click on this gadget and the changes that you have made will be ignored and the program will exit.

26 Save/Use: if you're happy with the changes that you have made, clicking on the 'Save' gadget will update the system configuration file so that your changes become permanent. If you need to use the changes but you don't want to overwrite the existing configuration, then click on 'Use'. Although the changes will be in use, if you then reboot the machine the old settings will be reintroduced.

The preferences for Workbench 1.3

Although this article is based on the preferences within Workbench 2.04 – the latest release of Workbench which is now bundled with all new Amigas – much of the information is just as applicable to Workbench 1.3. So don't worry if the 1.3 Preferences program looks rather different from the pictures on these pages – the theory and method when installing and using a printer is exactly the same under 2.04 and 1.3.

Still having printer problems? Well send 'em to Amiga Shopper's Amiga Answers

EXTRACTS FROM

SOMETHING WONDERFUL

There's a new Amiga on the way! - the A2200. What better reason then than to gather together Amiga Shopper's experts, sit 'em around a table, give 'em free beer and let 'em loose!...

The group dived straight into proceedings with their reactions to Commodore's new Amiga

AS: Commodore has announced that it is to bring out an '020-based machine before Christmas – the A2200 or A2400. What do we all think about Commodore going for an '020-based Amiga?



Andy Storer: editor of *Amiga Shopper*, avid news hound and former editor of *New Compter Express*

MS: Well, it's a logical step.

JW: They did say that this new machine would be sub £1,000.

MS: Is that with a monitor, or is it going to be like an A2000?

JW: That's without monitor. It's going to be like an A2500, but cheaper and with higher specs.

WR: Any mention of a MIDI interface?

AS: No.

WR: What about the rumours of Roland sound chips, and of graphics chips as well...

AS: There is no more detail other than it will be '020-based.

JR: If it's '020-based with a new board, rather than a standard 68000 chip with an 020 card fitted, like the A2500 was, then it will have an '020 with full 32-bit access to Chip RAM, and a full 32-bit memory access.

> *"The A2200 will be around four times faster than a standard Amiga"*

AS: What sort of performance advantages is an '020 going to give you over a standard 68000?

JR: It depends on the speed the chip is running at...

MS: I would guess 16MHz.

JR: Yes, well the Commodore plug-in '020 card gives a speed increase of around four times over a standard Amiga and a machine with 32-bit Chip RAM will be faster than that.

WR: But wouldn't you be better off buying an A2000 and putting in a GVP 25MHz '030 card for £599?

JR: Not really...I'd guess the new machine will have Zorro III slots rather than Zorro II. Now that would provide a lot more flexibility. It would also make sense if Commdore were to put it in an A3000 sized case and give it the A3000 processor expansion slot, which means you'd be able to use standard A3000 '040 cards and go straight from an 020 to an 040. With Zorro III slots you can expand to up to 64Mb of RAM on one card – so there' room for far more intelligent devices.

AS: Do you think Commodore will go for a PCMCIA smart card slot for the A2200 as well?

JR: It would make sense, if CBM wants to persuade software cómpanies to put stuff out on credit card.

AS: So the fact that memory cards for the new Amstrad NC-100 portable will fit the A600 is good news. It'll mean card prices will drop.

THE CREDIT CARD SLOT

AS: CBM claims that 40 per cent of all A600s being sold have hard drives. But those who buy a standard A600 could use the credit card slot to run a removable hard disk small enough to fit in your top pocket. Is this, forgive the pun, really on the cards?

JW: Oh, you can buy them now.

AS: Can we talk about that kind of add-on then ? What do you think is on the way for that slot?

JR: Everything you would get normally plugging into an Amiga's standard expansion slot. You'll see companies like GVP providing things like RAM expansions, samplers, and so on.

JW: If you look through the PCMCIA resource reference book, there are no Amiga developers listed, so they will have to start from scratch.

WR: I wonder if the A670 is going to plug into that slot.

MS: Yeah, it is.

JR: There's nowhere else you can plug it, which means Commodore is going to have the A670 as a boxed unit with a cable coming out and this credit card on the end. This means if CBM does produce top end machines with this slot, then there's instantly a CD-ROM drive for them.

WR: I wonder if developers will side-step the A600 though. The one thing I was waiting for was for some sort of plinth that the A600 sits on which converts it to an A500 with the edge connector/trapdoor configuration.

> *"You'll be able to expand up to 64Mb of RAM on one card!"*

JR: There's no reason why a developer couldn't produce a PCMCIA card that fits into the A500 slot, so that if you've got your GVP hard disk or whatever – just plug it in and then you're there. It would probably need its own power though.

DREAM MACHINES

AS: Can I go around the table and ask each of you what you're wish list would be on a new Amiga?

Mark Smiddy: Amiga developer, business correspondent and consultant editor

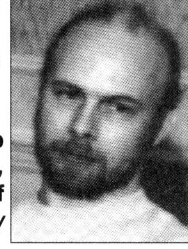
WR: A MIDI interface. The Ataris did so well because of this.

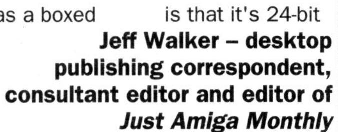
JR: I agree. It would be an easy thing to add – that's why Commodore put one in the CDTV.

AS: What about graphics?

JH: Well, if we were going totally crazy, I'd like to see a machine that's at least '030-based with 32-bit architecture and a custom chip set that was 32-bit as well; 24-bit graphics as standard; 8-channel, 16-bit sound; and MIDI.

JR: You can build this system now.





Jeff Walker – desktop publishing correspondent, consultant editor and editor of *Just Amiga Monthly*

JH: True. The talk about the A4000 is that it's 24-bit as standard, so what I've just described is not entirely crazy.

JR: But the market for base machines with 24-bit graphics and 16-bit sound isn't there yet – and it won't be until there's a vast amount of software that makes use of it.

MS: The problem is that no-one is going to want to develop software for a configuration that only a small number of people possess. If it was a case of 8-bit or 24-bit colour as standard, then developers would have to make use of it.

GOODBYE TO GAMES?

AS: Okay, let's assume that by 1994 the games market for the Amiga has plummetted and people are buying Nintendo SNES and Sega Mega Drives left right and centre. Where does that leave the Amiga?

JW: It leaves the Amiga 600 dead.

AS: Do you think so? If the Amiga wasn't being bought as a games machine, would that leave it as a sort of poor man's Mac? Whereas the Mac is *the* DTP machine, could you see the Amiga being *the* video and graphics machine?

JW: With the right software, and the hardware we were talking about earlier, yes. Commdore would have to scrap the A600, probably the A2200 and A2400 as well, and go A3000 upwards.

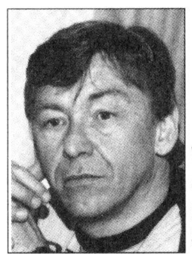
MS: What it also has to do is improve Workbench cosiderably; improve the whole of Intuition. Intuition is a great idea, but nowhere

The chaps on this page are some of our Amiga Answers panel – if you've got a problem, they have the solution...

Want to know everything that's happening?– then check Amiga Shopper's news pages – the best in the biz!

THE AMIGA'S FUTURE *is still* HAPPENING...

near as good as the Mac interface.
JW: And third party software will have to get better.



Wilf Rees: education correspondent and computing advisor to North-East Schools

JW: Kelly Sumner, Commodore's UK MD – talking about the '020 machine and compatibility – said that developers still aren't fully exploiting the operating system.
JR: As a developer I know CBM is doing a lot of work on that.

CD-ROM – THE FUTURE?

AS: Commodore is putting 450 point-of-sale units in shops. At the centre is a CDTV with keyboard, flanked by 30-35 titles and with the standard 600 and the 600HD beneath. It's interesting that CDTV is taking the centre stage. It's actually physically being positioned as Commodore's leading brand. Now, relating this to the possible demise of the games market, do you think Commodore sees the Amiga CDTV computer as its saviour?
JW: Commodore don't actually say that, but I think these POS units confirm it. There's the CDTV and the CD-ROM drive...
AS: ...and the trade-up scheme – take in your A500 and get a CDTV with keyboard, disk drive and mouse for £399.
WR: I considered buying CDTV for the school where I work, but after all the pre-launch hype I wasn't impressed at all when I finally got to see it.
JW: A lot of stuff for it shows promise though .
GW: Have Commodore got this Kodak system sorted out yet?
JR: They showed Photo CD test disks running on CDTV at various shows, so the hardware works... if you have the advanced video card (essentially DCTV) to display it. There's also a lot of interest in the use of Photo CD for Amiga desktop publishing.
WR: But isn't that just like CBM: they bring out something something revolutionary – and then put the old Amiga with a 68000 chip in it?
GW: 1.3 based, at that – *and* a Welcome disk that tells you how to switch the machine on.
AS: So what are the benefits of trading in your old A500 for a CDTV computer?
JR: An extra year's guarantee!...
MS: You get Workbench 2 if you haven't already got it!
AS: But you can add upgrades to CDTV – hook up printers and more memory and so on.
JR: Yes, it's got all the standard Amiga ports and two internal expansion ports. One is a video port which usually takes the modulator, but it's got an internal modulator. So you could use that port for a genlock.

> **"Commodore had to reverse engineer its own chips and hack them!"**

JW: Will this kind of hardware sell it?
JR: It's the software that will sell it.
JW: That's what I think. Take *Trivial Pursuit*. Someone has finally produced a CDTV title that responds as it should – when you press a button, something happens immediately. It's got good sound and animation... Others will have to do the same.
JR: But it took eighteen months to do that. There are several companies doing very big CDTV projects but they're all going to appear between now and Christmas. They've all been waiting for the A570 to launch.

Jolyon Ralph: hardware correspondent, Amiga and CDTV developer

JW: So while these titles are going to sell the CDTV, they are also going to sell A570s to A500 owners, and A670s to A600 owners...

BEST PRODUCTS

AS: What have been the most exciting products this year?
WR: *MicroMeasure*. It works with a genlock and a video camera, and it enables you to calibrate the screen and to record movement, time, distance... Unlike most software, what you use it for is entirely up to you. For example, you could view someone throwing a discus, put markers on the tape and analyse their body movements. A very clever bit of software.
MS: Progressive Peripherals' '040 accelerator for the A500. The best software I've used this year is *Professional Calc*, but third party hardware developers are well ahead of third party software developers.

Jason Holborn: software correspondent, musician and long-time Amiga afficionado

JR: Hardware? I think the new AD516 stereo 16-bit 8-track sound card is pretty amazing. As for software, the new version of *NComm 2* for the A600 is pretty good, and supports the credit card slot for paying for on-line services.
GW: The AVideo 24 card. It's cheap and it does the job, even though you have to plug it inside the machine. Maybe it ought to be bundled with professional systems.
JW: I think ARexx is very underrated. It's tremendously exciting.

AMIGA PAST AND FUTURE

AS: Where do you think we are in terms of the Amiga's development? Is this one of the most exciting years since 1985?
JH: Yes, and it's just starting now. For seven years things have been pretty static. Now in the space of about two years, we've had Workbench 2.04 – which is a huge advance – 24-bit cards, 16-bit sampling cards, ARexx... Things are really starting to happen.
AS: Is there more value for money?
JH: That is the case with all technology. You tend to carry on paying much the same price for something, but the product keeps getting better – like hi-fi equipment.
JR: Yet people think Commodore has been static since 1985 and hasn't done anything except new Agnus and Denise chips...
JH: Well, the enhanced chip set was designed back in 1985.
JR: The problem was that the designs for the original chips were lost. It's true! Commodore had to reverse engineer its own chips and hack them! - so the enhanced chip set wasn't a major rebuild because there wasn't time.
WR: I'm disappointed with what's happening now. The machine was quite revolutionary when it was first introduced...
JW: Quite? It was stunning!
WR: Still, in the last seven years, the competition might not have caught up – but it has come damned close.
AS: So where has Commodore failed to seize the opportunities?
WR: It's failed to take advantage of the increase in graphic power.
JW: 'Failed' is a bit strong.
WR: It's failed to increase the processing speed.
JW: Ah, but it hasn't failed to sell.
WR: I don't mean failure in terms of how many have *been* sold, I'm talking about the marketplace over the next five years. Commodore has failed to build on what it had already achieved.
JW: Still, for the last three years they've made all the right decisions – with the A500 Plus as an exception. Remember when they went from the A1000 to the A500 and everyone said "crap machine, that's the end of Commodore", but it was only said for about six weeks. The A600 is in the same situation. The price is low, it will sell and people will start developing for it. So why should CBM spend more money on another machine that may not? It's using a proven system. We're forgetting that Commodore is in business and its aim is to make money!...

Gary Whiteley: video correspondent and freelance film-maker

AND THERE'S MORE...
But what about the threat from PCs? And the squeeze from consoles? And what about the A4000 range? Catch the full discussion on **October 1st** in November's ***Amiga Shopper***

Confused by Zorro III, 32-bit RAM, 24-bit graphics and PCMCIA? – they're all explained in Amiga Shopper

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Commodore has led the way with the release of its CDTV system. Now that the long-awaited A570 drive is here, just about every Amiga owner can join in. Already there are over 100 titles available on CD-ROM for it, and this range is due to increase at a phenomonal rate. See the debate on page 8 for our opinions on how CD technology will revolutionise Amiga computing.

To enter and win one of these remarkable machines, have a go at the three rather easy multiple choice questions posed in the box to the right. Put your answers to these on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope, along with the number of the page in which the phrase 'here is no water, only rock' appears in November's issue of *Amiga Shopper* (on sale 1 October). Dash off your entry to:

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The closing date for entries is 6 November. Only one entry will be accepted per household.

THE QUESTIONS

What was the name of the prototype version of the A570?
a) A690
b) A670
c) Charlie

On what technological device do compact disc players rely?
a) phaser
b) phosphor
c) laser

Measured in bits, what is the information resolution of a CD?
a) 8
b) 16
c) 24

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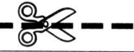
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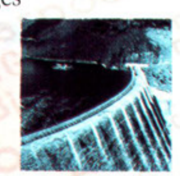


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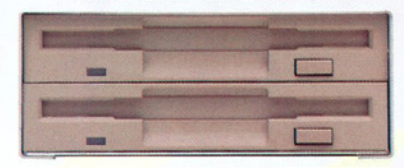
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*Due to the precision nature of the Blitz copier high density disks may be required with some internal drives.

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Jason Holborn casts a critical eye over one of the first Forth compilers to be released for the Amiga.

Helios Forth

Programming Language ■ £119.95 ■ Helios Software

THE HELIOS FORTH system comprises a number of development tools that are used to write, compile and then debug your Forth programs. The most immediately useable of these is the Editor which enables you to write and compile your Forth program in one module. Although the editor uses the Amiga's Intuition GUI quite extensively, I still found it rather quirky, and for compiling code, I eventually swapped back to my copy of Cygnus Ed 2.

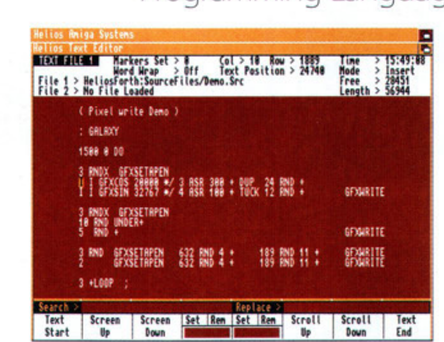
For those of you who prefer to use your own text editor, then Helios also provides a stand-alone compiler which can be run from the AmigaDOS Shell. Because Helios Forth doesn't require access to any external 'include' files (more on this later), its compiler is actually very rapid and produces compact code. And, although it's not as compact as true Assembler, it certainly shows up other compiled languages such as C and Modula-2.

The Helios Forth compiler doesn't actually produce code which can be executed directly. Instead, you must use a separate executive program called FEXEC which executes the compiled code for you. Thankfully you are allowed to distribute this 'Executive', so it's still possible to use Helios Forth to develop commercial software.

Helios Forth doesn't directly support the Amiga's wide range of system libraries (although this is possible if you use library offsets) instead, it uses its own subset of commands which allows extensive use of such Intuition facilities as custom screens, windows, menus and gadgets. As a result, there are no complex 'include' files to mess around with - all you have to do is to learn the command subset, and you can develop applications that take full advantage of the Amiga's windowing environment. This certainly makes programming the Amiga easier because much of the nitty gritty of accessing the system libraries is already done for you.

Also available separately are a number of support libraries that extend Helios Forth still further. These include an Audio extension (enabling you to play *Sound Tracker* modules among other things), an IFF extension (load and save images in IFF images without having to parse them manually), gadgets (provides greater access to Intuition gadgets), Gels (automatic Amiga Graphic ELements System with blitter routines), text edit (custom routines for text handling) and even a library that provides direct support for the Datel GeniScan hand scanner.

Forth is a natural for applications that create fractal images such as the Julia and Mandelbrot sets.



The Helios Forth editor enables you to write and compile your code using a nice friendly front end.

Having become accustomed to more traditional Amiga programming languages such as C and Assembler, switching to Forth will come as something of a shock for even the most experienced of programmers. This lack of acceptance could well be a major stumbling block for Helios Forth. And, although Helios have done a fine job of implementing a very useable programming environment, the lack of third-party support – especially among book/manual publishers – may prove to be a major problem.

Thankfully Helios hope to fix this problem by offering an extensive support service. Plans are already afoot for an Amiga/Forth users group with a regular newsletter. Helios will be pleased to help users locate any appropriate documentation they require including general books on the Forth language. Helios Forth certainly needs this sort of backup – without it.

No doubt many users will still go for established programming languages such as C, but you should certainly not discount Helios Forth as a viable development tool. The code it produces is compact (especially when compared with C) and is very, very fast. If you need raw speed but can't face learning Assembler, then Helios Forth is a recommended purchase.

HELIOS FORTH is available from Helios Software. 0623 554828

GOING FORTH

The Forth programming language was designed in the late 1960s by Charles Moore. He was unhappy with the programming tools available to him on the IBM 1130 system, so he set about designing a new language. In designing Forth, Moore had two primary aims:

The first was to design a language that made communication with the computer more natural and therefore, therefore more efficient. He believed that his new language would enable programmers to produce code far faster and more enjoyably than extant languages.

The second objective for Moore was to try and make his new language compact, efficient, fast and as portable as possible. Although Forth eventually became the standard language for scientific astronomical research, it has never achieved the kind of acceptance among less technically specific programmers that Moore had hoped for.

Despite its undoubted compactness and speed, Forth has gained itself something of a bad reputation due to what many users see as its 'unreadability'. To the average user, who is used to languages such as BASIC or Pascal, Forth seems almost totally unfathomable due to its use of Reverse Polish Notation (a mathematical system) and other eccentric quirks. Despite this, there are many professional programmers who swear by Forth and would never consider any other language.

Helios Forth

SPEED ●●
Compilation speed is very good indeed although the bundled editor is rather slow at times.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
A thorough rundown of using the development tools, Helios also include a number of tutorials.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
If you are used to more traditional Amiga languages such as C, the Forth will be a challenge.

FEATURES ●●●●
A very capable implementation that offers extensive use of the Amiga's operating system.

VALUE ●●●●
£120 may seem expensive, but Helios Forth is still much cheaper than its rivals.



76%


Access







This is Russia, well a bit of it. You would look a fool if you wandered about it, unable to speak a word of the lingo. So learn.

Sick and tired of being laughed at by your European pals who can speak numerous languages fluently? Take a trip with **Tim Smith** as he examines the latest in Amiga learning software.

Audio Gallery

Language learning software ■ Micro-PACE UK ■ £51.06 - £76.59

AUDIO GALLERY is available from Micro-PACE UK 0753 551888

THE BEST WAY to learn a language is to stay in its country of origin for a few months. But this method has two flaws: firstly, very few of us can afford a few months off in Russia or Spain; secondly, you have to leave your Amiga behind.

Audio Gallery is a series covering several European and Asian languages and, even if it is a little on the pricey side, it does succeed in solving the two problems stated above.

Essentially this American-produced, interactive language learning software enables you to try out your oral skills rather than having to make do with stodgy books or constantly having to rewind tapes.

It's a hefty package as well; the Russian version we reviewed runs to some 12 disks, plus a Hugo 'Learn to Speak Russian' book and heaps and heaps of bumph. This was the first disappointment; amid all of the bumph lurks a tiny manual which takes you through the installation process, busts a bit of jargon, and tells you how to use the program.

Because the program is very, very simple to use, this is not the end of the world, but still – at the price you might expect more.

Once up and running, quite happily on an A600 or A500, you are submitted to some *Playschool*-like 'dingly' music (gets you in that educational mood, I guess) and the options menu appears. This is almost the only decent graphic – the rest of *Audio Gallery*'s graphics are exactly what you we have been forced to accept from educational programs for the last few years. They are childlike, cheap and cheerful.

But pretty pictures do no a polylinguist make. This program is based on clicking on pictures in order to find out what the Russian for them is, and then hearing a nice Russian lady (or she might be Georgian) pronounce them for you. And, at long last, we have found the real use of this program; pronunciation.

The system works like this: you get your mouse, your use it to click on an icon (say of a pig) and the nice Russian lady breathes the Russian for 'pig' at you from the speakers. Do the same with 'cow', 'face', 'ice cream' or even 'hello, how are you?'. In fact you can click on and then hear the word(s) for an innumerable selection of different words from the wide selection.

And once you've clicked and heard, you can then play a quiz in either Russian or English translation which tests your ability to remember the whispered words. The basic problem with a language such as Russian which uses the Cyrillic alphabet, is that you can see the words, but the letters don't mean anything to you – it's all very parrot fashion. This is where the Hugo Guide comes in useful, unless you want to wander around Vladivostock on your holidays saying "How are you, pig, ice cream, head, girl?".

With other languages, such as the Western European varieties, that make use of the Greek alphabet, this problem is less pronounced. But *Audio Gallery* does let you down by not being able to cope with things like syntax or current useage of the language that interests you.

That said, the disks do bear a wide breadth of information which is split into easy-to-handle sections such as Animals, Supermarket, and Greetings. All you really have to do is force yourself to concentrate, and make sure that you are working in total silence with no one bothering you.

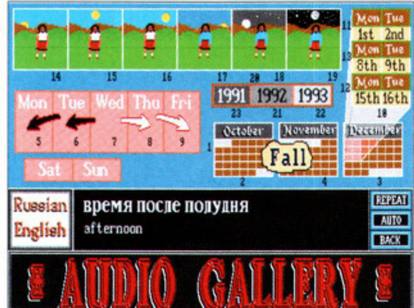
Once you've got the right circumstances, you should find that the *Audio Gallery* series provides a good stimulus to continue with a course of learning or to start one up, but in itself it won't teach you a language.



Above, animals; they night look the same in Russian but the majority of them sound a hell of a lot different.



Left, learning how to meet and greet your new comrades. This turns into a fun quiz later on.



Left again, it's time to learn lots of useful stuff about today, tomorrow, yesterday and next month. Another quiz follows.

Audio Gallery

SPEED ●●●
Installed on a hard disk, speed is not a problem. From floppy, the going does get a little slow.

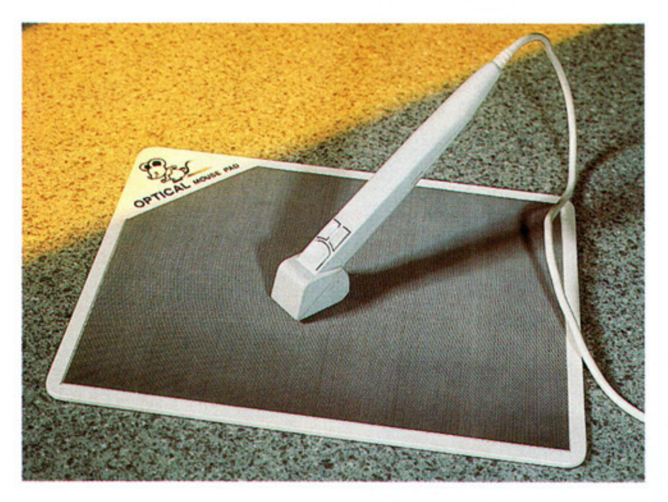
DOCUMENTATION ●●
Aside from the Hugo guide, the documentation is perfunctory to say the least.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
As accessible as a large, open door. Couldn't be easier.

FEATURES ●●●
Limited to parrot-fashion learning. It features a wide range of areas to use your language skills.

VALUE ●●●●
Compared to the cost of a full nightschool course , it rates very well.





Is it a mouse or a paintbrush? **Jason Holborn** puts it to artistic use and decides for himself what it is...

Brush Mouse

Brush Mouse ■ £29.99 ■ Golden Image

IF YOU BOUGHT your Amiga for its artistic capabilities, then no doubt you've discovered the mouse – the workhorse of the system – is far from ideal when compared to the tools of the artist's trade: the pen and paint brush. Hardware manufacturers have tried to come up with a solution that gives the digital artist the ease of use and flexibility of the paint brush. The latest 'alternative' mouse is the Brush Mouse, a strange looking device that is a cross between a mouse and a lightpen.

Designed with artists and designers in mind, the Brush Mouse is used like a conventional brush but features the same 'running gear' as an optical mouse. It comes complete with its own mouse mat which must be used otherwise it won't work. The surface of the mat contains tens of thousands of little dots that the Mouse uses to register movement.

It looks great but it's awkward to use and not precise enough for an artist's needs.

***BRUSH MOUSE* is available from First Choice Computers 0532 319444**

DeluxePaint Color

BRUSH MOUSE → JHolborn

NAKSHA MOUSE → JHolborn

Compare the two signatures – one produced using the Brush mouse and another with a conventional mouse – and it's easy to see why the mouse still reigns supreme.

This is transparent to the Amiga, so you can just plug in and go without having to run any form of installation software.

Several manufacturers are starting to use this system because – in theory – the optical mechanism should never get clogged up with grime (unlike a conventional mouse). As a result, you need never open it up – just clean the mouse mat occasionally.

Located on the top of the Brush Mouse's rather stylish casing are three buttons – one big and two small. The biggest of these buttons emulates the left mouse button while the right-hand button in the group of two emulates the right mouse button. These buttons take some getting used to, but after a while it becomes second nature. Why there is an extra button I don't know, possibly a sign of the Brush Mouse's PC origins.

In use, the Brush Mouse initially seems very responsive, but this unfortunately doesn't last for long. Using the copy of *Deluxe Paint III* bundled with the mouse, we tried a test. I've written my signature using both the Brush Mouse and a conventional one.

I would have expected the Brush Mouse to produce better results because it is so much like a real pen. Sadly, even with the movement sensitivity turned right down, the results are far from satisfactory. Although the signature I have produced using the Naksha is far from perfect, it still is better than the Brush Mouse. The awkward positioning and size of the three brush buttons doesn't help things either – all too often I find myself having to look at the pen to find the right button. And – because the right button is above the left – attempting to press both simultaneously is most frustrating. Then there is the problem of getting tangled up in the mouse's cable... I think you get the picture.

It's a shame the Brush Mouse doesn't perform as well as it could. I'm sure there are many Amiga artists who'd relish the thought of an alternative that works just like a pen but doesn't cost the earth (ie a touch tablet!). Unfortunately this isn't the product. It's awkward to use and it is just not precise enough. If you're looking for a mouse that works like a pen then you may want to check it out. Personally I'll stick with my trusty mouse!

Brush Mouse

SPEED ●●●
Although the Brush Mouse's response seems good on paper, it is hardly precise.

DOCUMENTATION ●●
The documentation is very good apart from one minor quibble – it's written for the PC!

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
Simple enough to get the hang of, and more intuitive than a mouse

FEATURES ●●●
Apart from the rather tacky construction, the Brush Mouse scores well.

VALUE ●●
You'd be better off spending the cash on a normal Naksha mouse, though!

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **65%**

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CrossDOS V4.02a Installation Program. © 1991 Consultron

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An excellent package that gives you the power to use PC/ST format at will. Highly recommend for those needing to transfer files from either platform.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **85%**

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The Amiga can only display 16 greyscales

Floppy Drives

"This drive contains more gadgets than Batman's utility belt"
Amiga Computing Feb1992

PC880B Power Drive



- Award winning drive manufactured by Power Computing
- Super slim design
- Anti-click (Cures that annoying click)
- Virus blocker (Prevents viruses)
- Built-in backup hardware

PC880B with Blitz Amiga £65
PC880B with Blitz & XCopy £90
PC880B (Cyclone compatible)* £70
PC880B in black case £65

*This drive is only available to registered owners of XCopy Professional. You must provide proof of purchase of XCopy Professional

Power Drives

PC880E Economy drive £49.95
PC881 A500 Internal drive £40.00
PC882 A2000 Internal drive £45.00

Dual Drive

- Two high quality disk drives built into one compact unit
- Same features as PC880B

Dual drive £125

Drive Accessories

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Maxell multi-colour disks (10) £9.95
Floppy disks bulk supplied .... £POA

Blitz Amiga

- Backup disks at lightning speeds
- Stops all external drives from clicking
- Contains anti-virus from being written into the bootblocker

Blitz Amiga £20

RAM Expansion

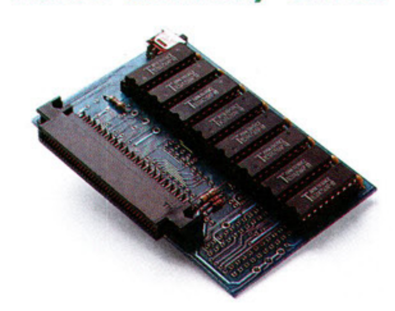
Blizzard Turbo

- A500/A500+
- Expand up to 8MB (0K installed)
- Memory and 68000 CPU run at 14.28MHz
- Fast 68000 processor already installed on-board
- Fully auto-configuring

Blizzard Turbo £169

RAMs continued

A600 Memory Cards



1MB RAM with clock £49.95
1MB RAM without clock £45.00

PC501+ RAM Card

Our RAM board is designed especially for the A500+ computer and comes with 1MB of RAM on board to expand your memory to 2MB of chip RAM. Plug-in and go operation (Fits into the trapdoor)

PC501+ RAM card £39.95

8MB for any A500

- Plugs into side slot, fully auto config, full thru'port. Expand 2MB-8MB

2MB £109 4MB £169 8MB £289
1 x 4ZIP chips £14.95

2MB for any A500

- Economy 2MB RAM externally cased
- 16-chip (1 x 1 DIP)
- No thru'port

2MB RAM £79

1.5MB RAM Board

- Fully supports 1MB of chip RAM
- Fully compatible with Fatter Agnus

(Kickstart 1.3 and above, not compatible with A500+)
(Your Amiga needs to be opened, this may effect your warranty)

1.5MB RAM board £75

1MB with Thru'port

- Expand your A500's memory up to a total of 2MB without disposing of your existing 512K upgrade
- Works with 1MB of Chip RAM

(512K RAM must be 4 chip type or not exceeding 9cm in length)
(Your Amiga needs to be opened, this may effect your Warranty)

1MB with thru'port £45

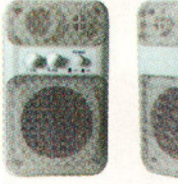
A500 RAM Card

- 512K RAM expansion with clock & free software (A500+ compatible)

512K RAM (4 chip) £29
512KRAM without clock £24
512K RAM (16 chip) with clock £24
512KRAM (16 chip) without clock £19

ZY-FI Amplified Stereo Speakers

REALISE THE TRUE SOUND POTENTIAL OF YOUR AMIGA WITH THIS PAIR OF FULL RANGE SPEAKERS !



Your Amiga produces fine quality hi-fi stereo sound. Enjoy quality stereo sound reproduction *to the full* with this new design twin speaker system! Incorporates a built-in amplifier with separate adjustable volume controls for each speaker unit. Runs from PSU (supplied) or from batteries (not included).

Speaker Dimensions 160x95x105mm (HxWxD)

ONLY £39.95

TOP VALUE 400dpi HANDY SCANNER

QUALITY SCANNING - AT THE RIGHT PRICE !

This Image Scanner package combines *top quality* hardware with the latest version of the distinctively powerful *DAATASCAN PROFESSIONAL VERSION 2* software, now giving TRUE GREYSCALE CAPABILITY.

At a genuine 400dpi scanning resolution, this new scanner produces truly superb quality scans. Has a full 105mm scanning width, variable brightness control and 100 / 200 / 300 / 400dpi resolution. **Daatascan Professional Version 2** scanning *and* editing software allows real-time scanning in either line art or in up to 64 simulated grey scales. Provides powerful editing features and excellent compatibility with most DTP and Paint Packages, eg. Deluxe Paint 4, Touch-Up.

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WE GUARANTEE that this is the smoothest, most responsive and accurate replacement mouse you can buy for the Amiga. Excellent performance, now with a 300dpi resolution. Amazing new price!

£14.99 SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

GOLDEN IMAGE OPTICAL MOUSE Amiga/ST compatible - excellent travel+accuracy assured. **NEW LOW PRICE!.. £ 29.00**

ROCGEN GENLOCK MK.II

SPECIAL OFFER!! INCLUDES 'HOME TITLER' SOFTWARE

OFFERING EXCEPTIONAL VALUE FOR MONEY, this fully compatible GENLOCK adaptor offers levels of quality, function and sophistication not normally available in this price category. Special features include the ability to record graphics & animations on video recorders and overlay graphic and text onto video. Capable of smooth and stable fading and overlaying effects with special tuning knob.

ONLY £79.99

ROCGEN PLUS

Compatible to any Amiga or Commodore CDTV, this NEW Genlock Adapter provides Advanced Special Effects and Performance Features without sacrificing user-friendliness!

New Special Features include: Dual Dissolve control knobs providing freely adjustable degrees of overlay or invert (keyhole) effects; Auto Video pass-thru; extra Video throughport for separate line monitoring; RGB pass-thru for real-time editing of Amiga graphics; plus Key-In port for use with an external keying device.



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£269.00 Including VAT, delivery & cable

Philips CM8833 Mk.II Monitor (Genuine UK version), includes cable, 1 Year on-site maintenance and 'Lotus Esprit Turbo 2' game .... £ 199.00

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NEW LOWER PRICES !!

- Built-in TV Modulator • Built-in IDE Hard Disk Controller
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Evesham Micros SPECIAL HARD DISK UPGRADED MODELS

We are now able to supply Amiga A600's with larger hard disks. We take a standard single drive A600 and install a high quality 2½" IDE hard drive.

40Mb	80Mb	120Mb
£479.99	£549.99	£629.99

All models available with 2Mb RAM – Please add £40.00

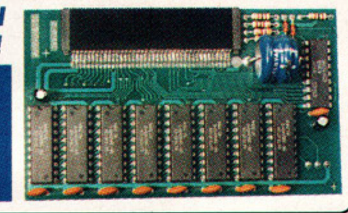
– NB: The hard disk installation is not covered by on-site warranty –

NEW FROM Evesham Micros A600 1MB RAM/CLOCK UPGRADE

UPGRADE YOUR NEW A600 TO 2Mb WITH THIS SIMPLE PLUG-IN MEMORY UPGRADE!

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- ☆ Increases total RAM capacity of A600 to 2Mb 'ChipRAM'
- ☆ RAM Enable / Disable Switch
- ☆ Battery-Backed Real-Time Clock

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You *can* improve software compatibility on your A500 Plus! By fitting our ROM switcher, you can alternate between the Kickstart 2 already resident and another version of Kickstart ROM chip, giving you the freedom of choice. Fitting is very simple indeed, and requires *no soldering* or special technical knowledge. Fitting allows two methods of switching; either by keyboard reset, or by an external toggle switch. **N.B. Kickstart ROM not supplied. A500 Revision 5A boards will require circuit modification.**

ONLY £24.95

Kickstart 1.3 ROM supplied separately .... only £29.95
Kickstart 2.0 ROM supplied separately .... only £39.95
A500 Revision 5A PCB Circuit Modification Service £29.95

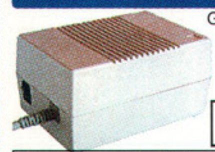
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Offering full compatibility with almost any Amiga audio digitiser package, our Sound Sampler features excellent circuitry, yielding professional results. The main A/D converter gives a digitising resolution of up to 50KHz, with a fast slew rate. Two phono sockets are provided for stereo line input, plus an option for microphone. Adjustable gain is achieved with built-in control knob. Complete with public domain disk containing sound sampling applications / utilities.

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Superb compact design!

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Gold Star REGISTERED DEALER

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Citizen Projet Inkjet Printer .... £ 399.99
Epson LX400 budget 10" carriage 9-pin 180/25cps .... £ 139.00
Epson LQ100 24-pin 180/60cps, 8k buffer .... £ 205.00
Panasonic KXP1124i uprated 24-pin model 300/100cps .... £ 279.00
Panasonic KXP2123 good value 24-pin colour model .... £ 299.00

Structured drawing programs lend an artistic edge to the mathematical precision of computer aided design. **Jason Holborn** sees whether Gold Disk's latest gets rid of his 'jaggie' edges.

AMIGA GOLD FORMAT

Professional Draw 3.0

Structured Drawing ■ £99.99 ■ Gold Disk

NO ONE COULD doubt the Amiga's graphical prowess, but for applications such as DTP, even the Amiga's high-resolution screen modes are just not good enough. Although they look very nice on-screen, visible 'jaggies' can be seen when the image is printed. This is because printers (especially laser and imagesetters) have a much higher resolution (dots per inch) than the Amiga's screen display.

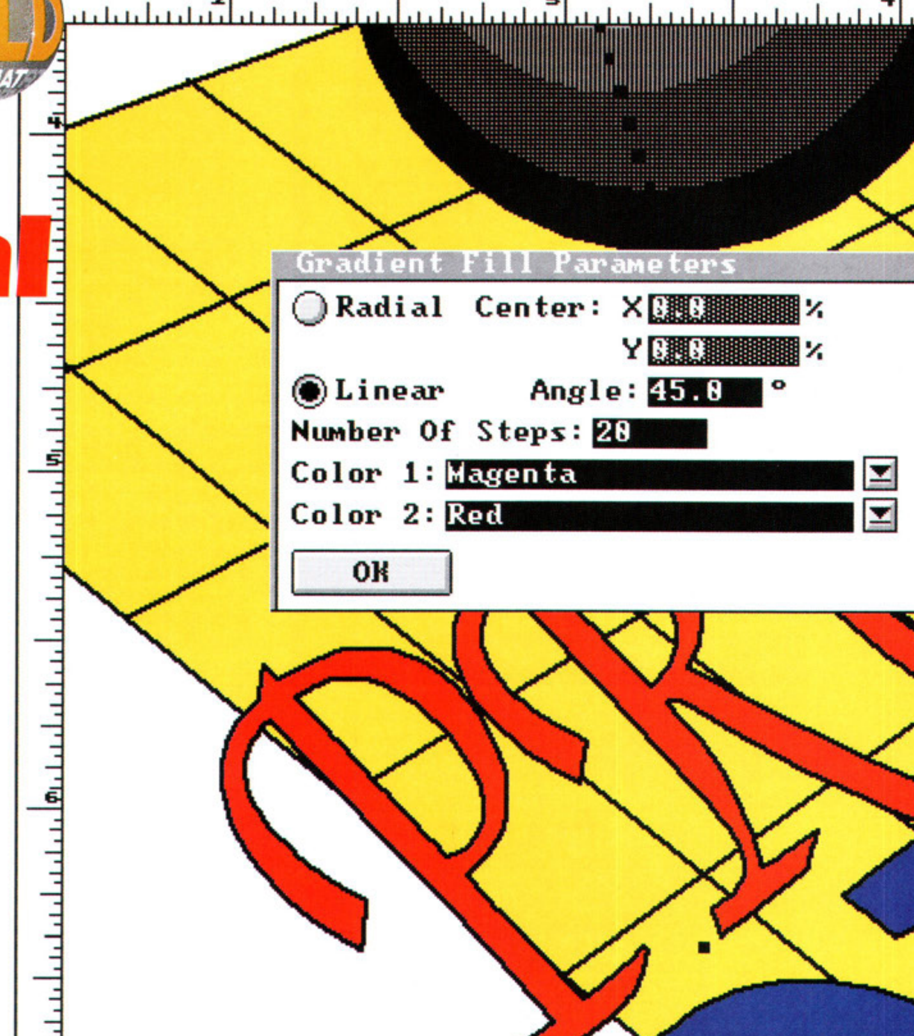
To overcome this problem, publishers use structured drawing programs (basically, computer aided design packages adapted for more artistic purposes). Unlike paint programs, structured illustration programs do not treat an image as a series of pixels. Instead, all that the illustration program sees is a set of points and lines which it converts into the image you see on your screen. When the image is printed, its resolution is limited only by your printer – that's around 300dpi for a dot-matrix and over 2,400dpi for an imagesetter (that's like having over 2,400 screen pixels for every inch on your display!). What's more, structured images can be scaled, rotated and skewed with no loss in quality!

Gold Disk are no stranger to structured drawing programs. *Professional Draw* was one of the first of its kind to be released for the Amiga (CAD programs don't count). Not wanting to rest on their laurels, Gold Disk have launched version 3, which is undoubtedly the Amiga's premier structured drawing program today.

Times are a changin' for Gold Disk users though. Like *Professional Page* 3, all floppy based Amiga owners are in for a shock. Gold Disk have beefed-up *ProDraw* 3 so much that it no longer runs on anything other than a fairly porky Amiga. A hard disk and extra memory are a must – the program can't even run until it has been installed. To get the *ProDraw* screen to even appear you need at least 2Mb of RAM.

Once *ProDraw* is installed on your hard drive, a double click on its icon sets the program in motion. After a few seconds of frantic hard-disk accessing, the first thing you will notice is *ProDraw*'s improved user interface. Based around the '3D look' that was pioneered by *ProPage* 2.0, *ProDraw* now closely conforms to the look and feel of Workbench 2.0.

PRODRAW 3.0 is available from Silica Systems on 081-309 1111.



New to version 3 of *ProDraw* is its facility to create graduated fills. All you do is specify the first and last colours in the range, the number of shades between these two colours and *ProDraw* does the rest.

***ProDraw*'s images really come to life when they are printed in high resolution**

Although Workbench 2.0 gadgets are not used, *ProDraw*'s various gadgets and requester have the same uniformity, but are better looking.

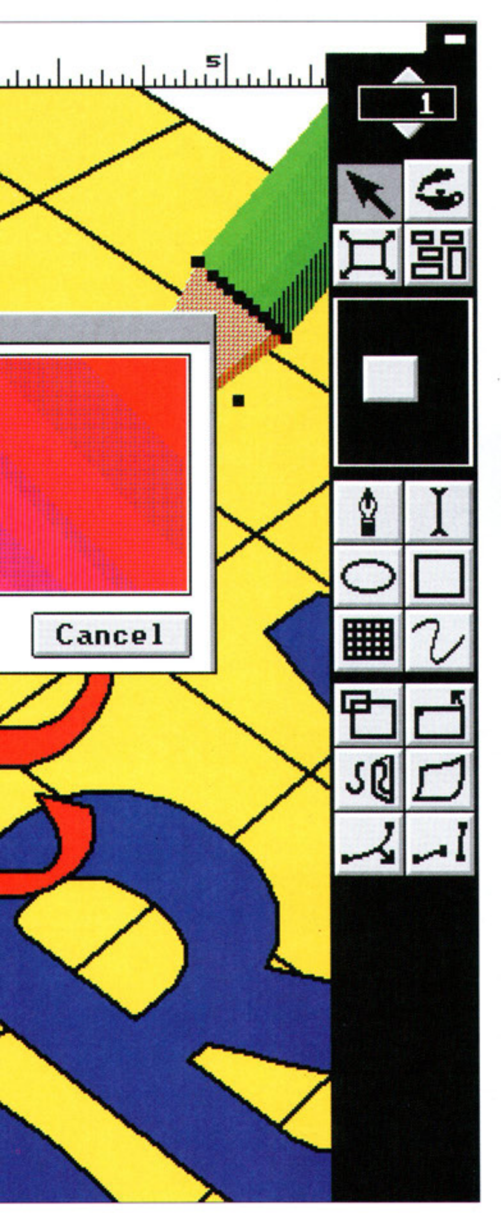
Gold Disk have gone to town with new features, not all of which are immediately obvious (*ProDraw*'s redraw rate is now much faster). The most obvious new feature, though, is support for the Pantone colour-matching system which enables professionals to pick the exact colour they want using an industry-standard colour referencing system. Most users will never use Pantone to the full, but even

TRACE ELEMENT

One of the most impressive new features of the previous *ProDraw* (version 2.0) was its unique 'Trace' facility, a small utility that Gold Disk claimed could be used to convert bitmapped images into structured artwork for use within *ProDraw*. Unfortunately, the version bundled with *ProDraw* 2 didn't work quite as well as it could – traced images often ended up looking nothing like their bitmapped counterparts. Thankfully Gold Disk have enhanced this too.

Trace version 2.0 is a very powerful tool that produces beautifully contoured images from even the naffest of bitmapped images. You may think that this is no mean feat, but the process involved in converting a pixel-based illustration to a series of lines is actually very difficult and it's a miracle that Trace works at all. Although GeniSoft's *ExpertDraw* offers a similar facility, very few so called 'professional' illustration packages on the Mac or PC offer such a facility. Once again, the Amiga leads the pack!

If you need to reverse the process, Gold Disk now include a utility called *ClipMap* which takes a structured clip file and converts it to a bitmapped illustration. This is useful if you need to use a logo you've designed in *ProDraw* within a presentation.

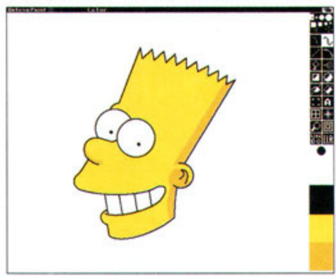


then it's useful because it gives you access to a much wider range of on-screen colours.

The text tool has been enhanced beyond belief. No longer do you need two separate sets of Compugraphic fonts (one for *ProDraw* and another for *ProPage*) – *ProDraw* can now directly use standard *ProPage* Compugraphic fonts without faffing around with a conversion program. Another improvement is the facility to type text directly on to the page making positioning text far easier. The speed of text redraw is also faster than previous versions.

ProDraw also comes with *ProPage* 3's *FontManager* program which means you're not restricted to the Compugraphic fonts Gold Disk supply. If you know a friendly PC owner, you can use *FontManager* to convert their Adobe Type 1 fonts to Compugraphic format, thereby saving you some cash. There are a couple of extra editing tools too. For starters, you no longer have to wait for *ProDraw* to redraw every object on the page in full colour when not in wireframe mode. Thanks to a new outline tool, you can draw only those objects in colour that you're interested in – the rest will be drawn in wireframe mode.

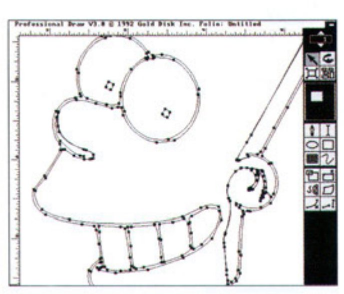
QUICK ON THE DRAW....



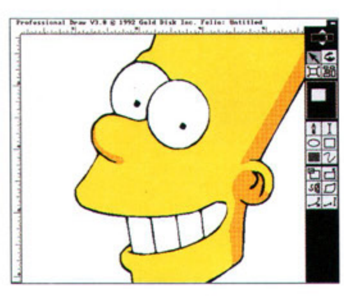
By far the easiest method of constructing a complex illustration, such as the face of Bart Simpson, is to use *ProDraw*'s powerful Trace utility. The first step is to draw the image using a conventional paint package such as *Deluxe Paint*. Once this is done, it can then be saved off to disk.



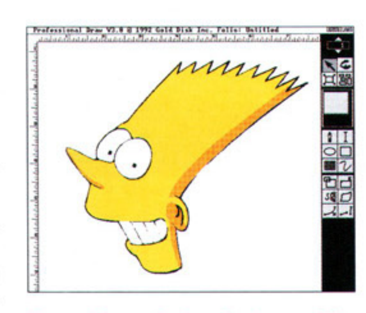
The next step is to load up Trace and enter the filename of the bitmapped image. All you have to do then is to tell Trace the filename of the clip file and assign a name to the clip. Click on the Trace gadget and the program does the rest. This can take some time on an unaccelerated Amiga, so be prepared for a wait.



Once traced, you can then boot up *ProDraw* and load the clip straight in. Here the clip is shown as a wireframe representation. Although the image has traced very well, some fine tuning may be necessary before it is perfect. This usually entails pulling out individual points and altering the angles of bezier curves.



And here's our image of Bart Simpson in all his structured glory. If you're happy with the results, you can now port him into a page make-up program such as *ProPage* 3.0 or print him out to paper. Unlike the bitmap we started on to begin with, our structured Bart can be scaled and rotated with no loss in quality.



Right, now to have some fun. Let's pull the image about a bit. Achieving similar results with a paint package is just about possible, but *ProDraw* makes it many times easier. Note how Bart's nose has been extended – this is easily achieved simply by pulling out the appropriate points and altering a couple of the bezier curves so that our digital surgery is flawless. Finally we skewed the entire image using *ProDraw*'s distortion tool.

Another new tool is Gradient Fill, which will please professional users. Just like *DPaint*, the gradient fill tool colours an object with a range of colours. All you do is pick the first colour, the last colour and the number of colours inbetween and *ProDraw* does the rest. You can also specify the angle of the fill or even create a spherical gradient fill.

The most powerful feature of *ProPage* 3 has made its way across into this latest release of *ProDraw:* ARexx Genies. Genies are macros which enable you to automate virtually every aspect of *ProDraw* using ARexx, a means by which you can write programs that tell other programs what to do. Extremely complex drawing operations that would take hours by hand can be automated until they more or less become extra tools in their own right. You will need Workbench 2.0 to use this facility, but ARexx is a good reason to buy 2.0 anyway.

ARexx also adds another powerful and useful facility. If you own *Professional Page* 3.0 then *ProDraw* provides a 'hotlink' facility which enables the two products to swap drawings directly through ARexx. Imagine the scene – you've just pulled a structured graphic into *ProPage*. Unfortunately it isn't right so what do you do? Well, all you have to do is load up *ProDraw* and then select the box containing the drawing within *ProPage* and then select 'PDraw' from the 'Draw' menu and the drawing is sent directly to *ProDraw* for modification. Once complete, just select 'Send Clip Home' from *ProDraw*'s 'Special' menu and the drawing is sent straight back to *ProPage*. Isn't ARexx wonderful?

I've always been a fan of Gold Disk's DTP products and this release hasn't dampened my enthusiasm. *ProDraw* has been improved to such an extent the competition (programs such as GeniSoft's *ExpertDraw*, for example) are going to have to try very hard to even match it. Now that Gold Disk have tidied up the user interface and speeded the whole thing up (not to mention extras such as Pantone colour and gradient fills), *ProDraw* 3.0 is the most powerful structured drawing program available on the Amiga. If you're serious about DTP, then *ProDraw* 3 is an absolute must.

Professional Draw 3

SPEED ●●●●
Screen redraw takes time, but it's far from snail paced. On an accelerated Amiga it really flies!

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
Like all Gold Disk manuals, *ProDraw*'s manual is clear and very readable.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●
Some of *ProDraw*'s more powerful features take some getting used to.

FEATURES ●●●●
Thanks to the new Genie support, *ProDraw* offers pretty well all you need.

VALUE ●●●●
Compared to similar programs on the PC and Mac, *ProDraw* 3 is phenomenally good value.



Turn your Amiga into the ultimate Hi-Tech workstation environment, only £34.99

NEW PROMOTION
8833 Mk II Monitor Genuine UK Model Now with Turbo Challenge II Promotion. Only **£199** inc VAT



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CORPORATION: Makes Robocop look like a girlie

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+Turbo Challenge II Promotion
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Add £49.95 for 1Mb extra RAM

we cannot be beaten on price

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Hard Disk repairs are 12 months return to base

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Term & Mod.26
Term

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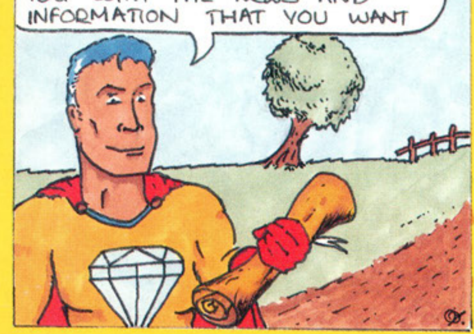
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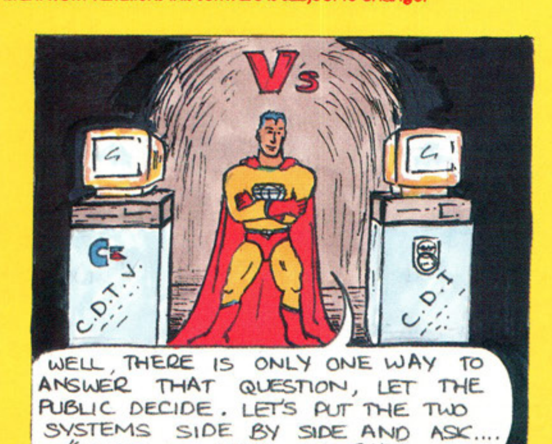
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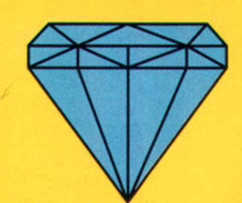






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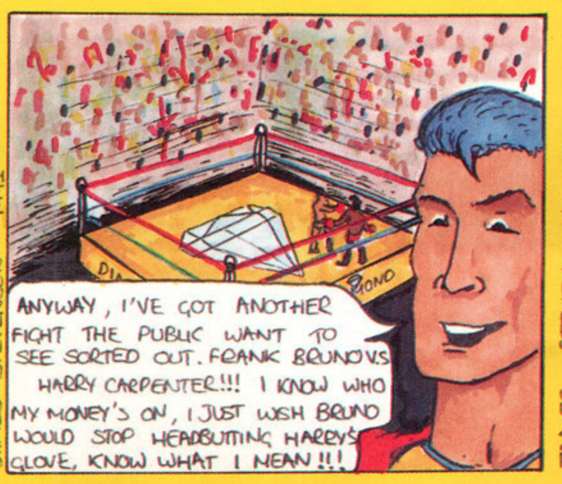
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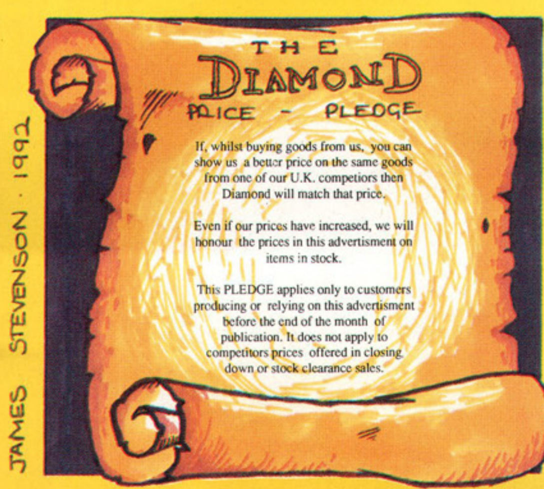
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Take four software packages into the office? Not **Asam Ahmad**, he wants to get all his work done with one package and go. And he can with Europress' all-in-one business program...

mini Office

Combined office ■ Europress Software ■ £59.99

***MINI OFFICE* WAS** first released way back in 1984 on a wide range of mainly 8-bit computers such as the Amstrad CPC. It was heralded as an all-in-one solution for the small business user requiring basic housekeeping facilities to run their own mini office. It was great at the time, especially considering that it was an all-in-one option, but nowadays, with the Amiga having numerous individual software packages of a very high standard, can *mini Office* hold its own…

The package comes on four disks, and consists of the five program modules and the main menu program where all the tasks are launched from. You can run all the programs individually, just by double-clicking on their icons, but the menu program also provides configuration options so it is wise to use it initially to set it up the way you want.

One thing that has been omitted, though, is a hard-disk installation utility. The manual does guide you to installing *mini Office* on to your hard drive manually, and this is clear enough, but unfortunately there is one little point that has been left out by the makers of this program, and that is you have to assign 'mini Office:' to wherever you have installed it, otherwise a 'Please insert volume…' requester will keep popping up. Ideally of course there should be an installation script, because most people who will be inclined to buy *mini Office*, will probably have a hard drive.

The manual is well written, with lots of information packed in there. Somewhere. It's not difficult to find exactly, just that there is a lot for you to wade through, because the manual is geared towards first-time users, with little technical information. As such, all the command options are listed in a verbose form, so a reference card would have been handy to look up keyboard shortcuts without having to delve into the manual.

The five modules you get are Word Processing, Database, Disc Utilities, Spreadsheet and Graphics. The last two are really designed to complement each other, and use interchangeable data to produce graphs etc, from data created by the spreadsheet. Let's have a look at them.



This lovely screen is actually the main menu screen where you can launch any of the four modules or disc utilities via the icon with the spanner on it.

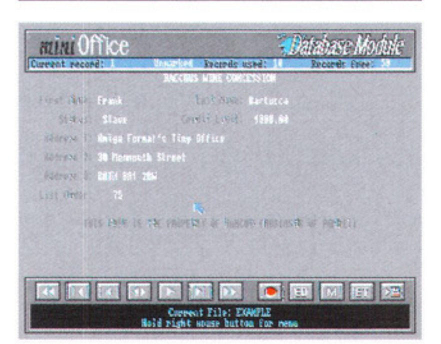
WORD PROCESSING:

Quite a decent tool this one, ideal for creating letters and such like. It works well, and has formatting options such as centering, and flush margins, and is surprisingly speedy in its operations. You can also open up to five documents at the same time, memory permitting. As well as just editing text, you can also import graphics. It can import any standard IFF but the facility is really designed to allow you to integrate data from the graphics module into your text so that you can produce reports with graphs and charts on them.

The Word processor module is ideal for creating short documents, and is quite nippy when in operation. It has some good facilities such as mail merge from the database.

It comes with its own dictionary which helps you correct all those silly spelling errors, but the process of checking a document can be a little slow, mainly because it stops quite often at long hard words that anyone over the age of 10 might use. Apart from this, it's not too hot on suggesting alternatives, though it does have a go.

The module also allows you to define macro keys where you can assign frequently used text to a function key, and you can even embed printer codes to control your printer. Font support however is pretty lacking, and it can only use fixed-width 8-point fonts. Apart from this, there is not much to fault it. It is a good little workhorse for short documents.



Data from the database module can be incorporated in to the other modules so you can avoid having to duplicate unnecessary information.

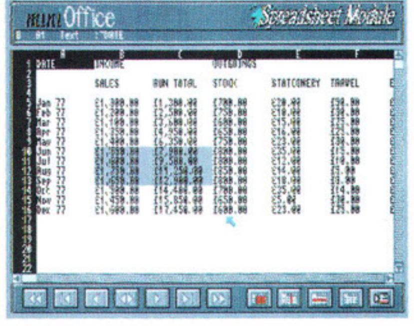
DATABASE:

Databases are designed to behave like card indexes. The module in *mini Office* is actually quite a mean contender in its own little way, with some advanced features only found in more expensive packages to complement its basic indexing system. It has a typical video recorder-style button interface to navigate yourself around your entries, making it pretty straightforward to operate.

The database is set up by creating a template which defines the positions of all the text that will appear in each entry. This is a rela-



Mini Office incorporates its own suite of disk utilities in an easy to use, but relatively simple utilities module. It contains just the basic commands for file manipulation, but it's still easier than using the CLI.



The graphics module can create some good graphs with up to four sets of data displayable on each type of graph.

And this is the spreadsheet in all of its glory. You have limited control over data in the graphics module, but it's here you create all your raw data for your expenses or other businessy type things.

tively easy process. One feature not common in cheaper databases, but is included here is the ability to create an entry in your record that contains a formula, enabling you to do simple calculations from within the program.

Due to the information exchange policy that *mini Office* employs, you can also import ASCII text from the word processor, and even graphics into each record. This is not just a gimmick, but can be very useful, especially when creating indexes where graphics can help, such as a list of all the wild birds that inhabit Bath…

MINI OFFICE is available from Europress Software 0625 859333

DISC UTILITIES:

This module is designed to provide the user with basic housekeeping functions such as copying and deleting files without having to leave the *mini Office* environment. In this respect it can be very useful, providing you with functions normally accessed via the command line interface (CLI).

There is also a disk-copying function built in to the program, and in fact the manual instructs you to use the Disc Utilities *DiscCopy* program to make backups of your original master disks. You can also format disks, and rename files etc. all the standard disk-management tools.

The program is very useful, and its addition shows an element of thought going into *mini Office*'s development process.

SPREADSHEET & GRAPHICS:

Spreadsheets are actually very powerful programs that are often underused. *Mini Office*'s spreadsheet module is quite a complex affair, and as such can be used for just about any mathematical calculation you can think of. You can use it in conjunction with the graphics module to produce graphs and charts in numerous styles and save them in IFF format so you can edit them in a paint package.

You can set up the spreadsheet to do multiple calculations at a stroke by defining formulae in the cells of the grid. These can cross reference other cells, taking values out of them and replacing them with newly calculated figures. You can even use it for just doing simple list additions etc, using it as an extension of a calculator.

One thing I particularly like about the spreadsheet is its comprehensive formula command set, however the program in general can be a little sluggish when creating a large sheet.

The thing that strikes you about *mini Office* is the way that everything works the way you would expect it to, primarily due to the fact that the programmers have thrown the standard AmigaDOS interface out of the window and have provided you with a control method that is consistent across the modules. It is this consistency that makes *mini Office* the program it is.

Somebody who has just set up a little business doesn't want to mess around learning the intricacies of the Amiga, and this is where *mini Office* scores. Something else that boosts the program's appeal is the information interchange principle that *mini Office* is based on. You are bound to want to include some sort of data from one module into another and *mini Office* lets you do this, simply and effectively with little restriction.

On the whole, if you do want an all-in-one system comprising all the basic office tools, you can't go far wrong with *mini Office*.

DATABASES, SPREADSHEETS AND THE WORLD

So what is a database then, and how can it help me? At its simplest, a database is a glorified card index. You might think it'd be easier to use a card index, rather than having to boot up your Amiga and load your database file, and you'd be right. Then again, you would be overlooking the power that such databases can provide you with.

Picture, if you will, the situation where you have around 1,000 people in your personal directory. Statistics show that you will have at least three people with the same birthday. Try looking for those three in a card index! On your database you would simply specify the date, or indeed any other criteria upon which you need data, and the computer does the searching for you. Great.

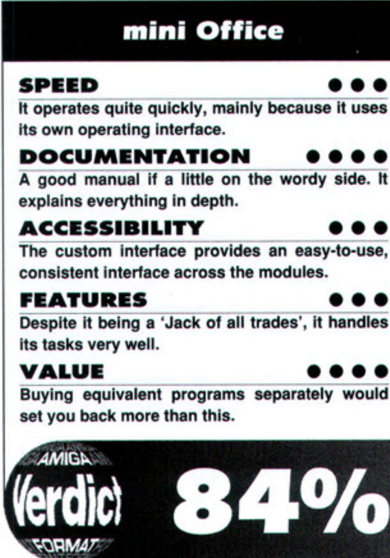
It's a lot quicker, and if you have a printer, you can just get your Amiga to print out labels etc, for all the people you want. The uses for database are only really limited to your storage capacity, so you can literally hold millions of entries on anything you want to file.

You don't want a calculator, you want a spreadsheet! So what's with this spreadsheet lark? Well calculators are great things, you can do loads of complex calculations. Say you have a shopping list for a dinner party, and you think, well what if I had ten guests to dinner instead of eight? It isn't simply a case of adding two more sets of food to the list, as you may not need more of some of the ingredients, eg sugar. In this case you'd just add the extras to your list, and the computer automatically works out your new total.

This works because you don't have to re-enter all the data, just the bits that have changed. You can even refer to cells in your sheet by names.

In reality, of course you'd probably use a spreadsheet for keeping lists of numbers that need to be added up or for actually solving hard simultaneous, differential, integral quadratic equations that they used to give you at school.

The world? Well what can I say about the world that you don't already know? S'great innit.



mini Office

SPEED ●●●
It operates quite quickly, mainly because it uses its own operating interface.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
A good manual if a little on the wordy side. It explains everything in depth.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●
The custom interface provides an easy-to-use, consistent interface across the modules.

FEATURES ●●●
Despite it being a 'Jack of all trades', it handles its tasks very well.

VALUE ●●●●
Buying equivalent programs separately would set you back more than this.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **84%**



The brief was to pick out what software **Amiga Format** would include in the ultimate, all-in-one business software package. **Asam Ahmad** uses a few superlatives to describe some mega software...



This certainly won't be the state of your office if you acquire the ultimate in software that is the *Amiga Format Mega Office*. Don't expect to have too many pennies left though.

The Amiga Format Mega Office

MOST PEOPLE, GIVEN the choice, would buy an all-in-one package for their productivity needs, especially if it was cost effective - it's the natural thing to do. However, sometimes, all-in-one packages can be more of a 'Jack of all trades' affair, and not up to the standards of more specific programs that deal with their separate fields in greater depth than one complete pack. *mini Office* is a good program, but it may not be everyone's cup of tea, so here we look at programs that are basically full-blown equivalents to the separate modules found in *mini Office*.

The four main sections are really word processors, databases, spreadsheets (graphics capabilities included) and finally disk utilities. The programs I've chosen are fundamentally direct replacements for the modules in *mini Office*, the best in their categories, and hopefully will give you an impression of what is out there, in the Amiga market.

Most of the individual programs are more expensive than the all-in-one mini Office, but the aim of this piece is basically to show you what our *Mega Office* would consist of if we put one together, not to find the cheapest alternatives. As such, the total cost of all the programs reviewed comes to a staggering £529.92. Is this the price you have to pay for excellence? Probably...

WORDWORTH 1.1
DIGITA INTERNATIONAL – £129.99

More than just a normal word processor, it is a word publisher. In basic terms this means that you have control over the layout of your documents and can include pictures into your works as well as having all the usual text-manipulation functions.

It is among one of the easiest to use in its class, with its own intuitive interface called the 'Human Interface Protocol' that operates in a very logical manner. Features-wise, *Wordworth* scores heavily. It can cope with multiple documents simultaneously, so you can cut and paste between texts easily, and you can use any standard Amiga font to print with, including the scalable typefaces that are now standard on Workbench 2. In order to overcome the low resolution that Amiga fonts suffer from, *Wordworth* employs font scaling technology to print smooth text on just about any type of printer. You can even print on PostScript printers.

It also comes with numerous import/export modules so it can process documents written on different word processors, and even save in their formats. Can't spell? *WW* can help you out here, because it boasts a very impressive dictionary and thesaurus, and it has some sophisticated word-matching algorithms to help correct your misspellings. Perhaps the best thing about *Wordworth* is that the output it produces correlates to the screen representation very well, providing you with almost WYSIWYG output. This really is essential for any serious users who expect a document to print in a certain way.

Wordworth comes with some excellently written manuals and it is an excellent choice for anyone needing a reliable, easy-to-use word processor that is very comprehensive in its functions. It even comes with its own little slide puzzle to play with when you get bored of writing articles...

AMIGA FORMAT GOLD **90%**

WORDWORTH **is available from Digita International 0395 270273**

DIRECTORY OPUS **is available from Checkmate Digital 071-923 0658**

PROFESSIONAL CALC **is available from HB Marketing 0753 686000**

SUPERBASE PRO 4 **is available from MicroPace 0753 551888**

DIRECTORY OPUS
INNOVATRONICS – £39.95

Nearly £40 for basically a CLI replacement program? Well you would be mistaken for thinking that this is just any old CLI replacement program like *SID*, but excellent though *SID* is, *Directory Opus* is much much more. *Opus* provides you with more of a new front end for your computer: where you can control your computer more finely than is possible with Workbench.

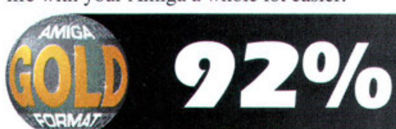
For a start, *Opus* enables you to perform all the basic kind of housekeeping functions such as copying, renaming and deleting files that you would expect and as far as this goes, there is no file function that I can think of that has been omitted. The real guts of the program really begin to come to light when you start to customise the program to do exactly what you want it to do.

Opus can launch just about any program you have on your computer simply by defining a 'button' on the control panel, or a menu item



to either run the file, execute a batch file or even control other programs via ARexx scripts. You can define functions to run over a hundred programs. You can even run utilities that take arguments such as Lharc, to extract files from an archive in the source directory to the destination directory as simply as double clicking on the archive file name.

All this is controlled by *Opus*' powerful script language that lets you control functions at will. *Opus* is excellent for even the casual Amiga user that doesn't just play games. Once set up and fully configured to will, it makes life with your Amiga a whole lot easier.



PROFESSIONAL CALC

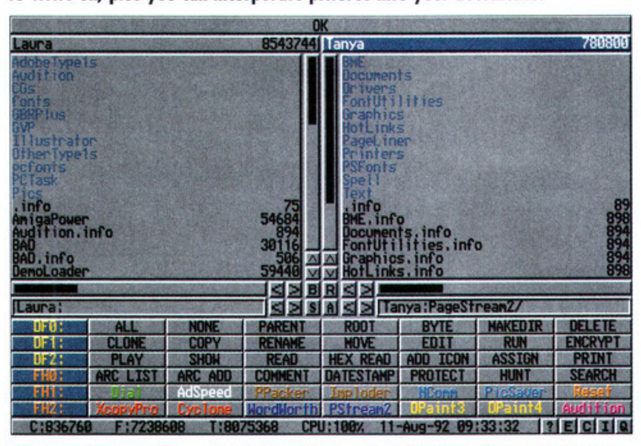
GOLD DISK – £159.95

Let's face it, spreadsheets are basically glorified calculators. Despite their limited appeal, they can actually be immensely useful tools for doing multiple calculations using what-if scenarios, quickly.

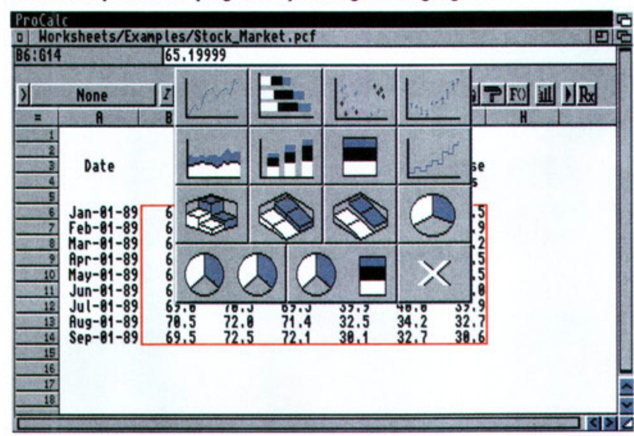
ProCalc is probably by far the best spreadsheet available for the Amiga, with very little competition. The thing that sets *ProCalc* apart from spreadsheets on other computers is that it is fully Amiga-ised. It really does take advantage of the facilities that the Amiga offers, like multiple fonts in the same spreadsheet. It is fully compatible with ol' daddy spreadsheet



***Wordworth* is excellent if you want a steady workhorse of a word processor to write on, plus you can incorporate pictures into your documents.**



***Directory Opus* can be customised and set up at will. Here I have set up *Opus* to run all my favourite programs by clicking on the gadgets at the bottom.**



***Professional Calc* is an excellent spreadsheet. You can display your information with a variety of charts and output them as structured drawings.**



***SuperBase Professional 4*. Power extreme. This program is actually more powerful than most PC databases in its league.**

Lotus 1-2-3, being able to read and write in *1-2-3* format, but unlike *1-2-3*, *ProCalc* is actually very easy to use.

ProCalc is also fast. It has some very quick number-crunching routines that enable it to update its cells quickly. Numbers are great, but people prefer pictures, and *ProCalc* can provide you with graphs and charts that would make the average PC owner turn rather green. *ProCalc* can produce graphs in standard IFF bitmap format, or *ProDraw* CLIP format for importation i-to desktop publishing packages, *Aegis Draw* and even Encapsulated PostScript format, so you can produce exceptional quality results from a PostScript printer.

Pie charts, bar graphs, line graphs, stacked graphs – you can do it all, and all by just a few clicks on your mouse. A truly superb program, and the great documentation makes it easy to grasp its power.



SUPERBASE PROFESSIONAL 4

OXXI-AEGIS – £199.99

As far as databases go, this is probably the best you can buy for just about any computer format. The whole thing is very well put together, right from the packaging and manuals to the operation of the program. It uses the now-familiar video deck control-panel system to search through your records, making data access easy, and even comes with its own programming language that allows you to define search strings through a command language similar to BASIC. This enables you to set up complex criteria for your selections and even lets you control *Superbase* over a network system.

Importing graphics is also very easy, with support for nearly all standard IFF ILBM files including the dynamic hi-res format that lets you use 4,096 colours in hi-res. Apart from this you can import GIF and PCX picture files that are more common on PC systems. You can also import database files created by *Lotus1-2-3* and Microsoft *Excel* on other platforms. Cherry on the cake? You can even attach sound samples in either IFF 8SVX or raw format to your records.

Superbase is also very flexible, and you can create some very complex templates quite easily – but don't expect to be able to do everything without reading the manual, there is a lot of useful information contained within it, including tips on what not to do when creating your databases.

It is a lot of money, but the program is such an excellent piece of programming, and Precision also provide for upgrading to *Superbase 4* from earlier versions at quite respectable prices for the increase in power that you get.



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PD Update

Pat McDonald extricates himself from an avalanche of new PD games and utilities to file this month's report on the latest and greatest from the wonderful world of free software.

FRAC V1.1
AMIGANUTS 1251




```
You are standing on a warm tropical beach. To the south the
placid sea hardly ripples under the beams of the hot sun. A few
yards away a large grey rock basks in the summer rays. To the
west there appears to be a cave, sheltered in the rockface,
while the north holds lush green vegetation.

>w
You stand in the shadow of a large rockface. A small river runs
from the forests (which lie north) into the sea, passing in
front of quite a large cave which has somehow found its way
into the rockface.

>n
You stand amidst large tropical trees. Exits lead east and
south.
You can see a mirror.
>take mirror
You take the mirror.
>examine mirror
There's not much to tell.
>
```

You are looking at a picture caption. To the North lies a text adventure creator. Well, it parsers the time.

Long ago, people played text adventures – games in which you had to type commands via the keyboard. Shunned nowadays by mainstream programmers, the odd fan of this type of game still shows up and with *Frac* 1.1 you can create your own text adventures.

Although the initials stand for 'Fantasy Role-Playing Creator', there's precious little of the traditional role-playing game to be seen. All of the options and programming procedures are contained in menus which you access through the keyboard.

Very similar in many ways to Incentive's 8-bit offering *Graphic Adventure Creator*, *FRAC* can display graphics or even animations at certain locations so you can design quite atmospheric adventures, although it would be nice to be able to add sound.

If you want to create your own text adventures, but don't know too much about programming, give this a look. Although it takes some time to get familiar with, the demo adventures help and everything is laid out in a straightforward fashion.

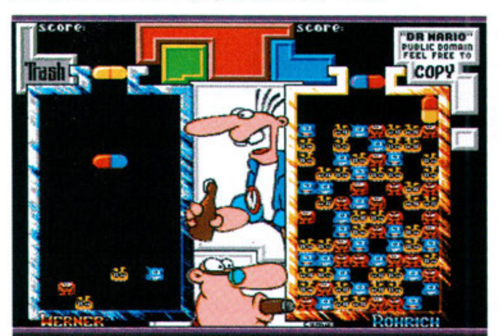
The programmer, Derek Whiteman, is interested in producing compendia of adventures made with his system. Who knows, in a few months time I might be reviewing your own text adventure.

DR MARIO
RIVERDENE GAM1064AM



Whatever will Nintendo say? They spend oodles of money designing a *Tetris*-like game, and Trash DK clones it on to the Amiga. The idea is to eliminate different coloured beasties placed at random on a chute. You do this by arranging coloured pills falling down the screen into lines of colour. A row or column of four will vanish – and if a similarly coloured beastie is touching them, they vanish too.

Fun for a while, *Dr Mario* is very limited in terms of long-term gameplay – you couldn't play it for hours on end. However, the skill level of the game can be altered, so if you want something to test your reflexes and brain occasionally, you could do worse.



Trash DK serves up a *Tetris*-a-like, demanding quick reflexes and a spot of grey-matter mashing.

ETERNAL ROME
17 BIT 2079



Can the Roman empire stand eternal under your command? *Eternal Rome* is your chance to find out.

This looks a bit dull, yet it's outstanding in many ways. *Eternal Rome* is about resolving who takes over the Roman Empire starting from 32BC. Playing on a large map made up of hexagons, most options are available via menu, then clicking on a hex. The map is centered on the Mediterranean and the countries change with the centuries.

Winning isn't just a matter of building fleets and armies and sending them into battle. Politics must also be dealt with, arranging alliances with the many semi-neutral states.

Although good, it's really only a demo. If you buy the full version then you get many more scenarios and the save option for the main game. Also on the disk is a game of dominoes. Although quite fun and not very easy (it's difficult to beat the computer consistently) the programmer has been unlucky with having to compete with a stonker like *Eternal Rome*.

HELLZONE
NBS G291



You are now entering *Hellzone* – oil that joystick for a no-frills, all thrills joystick-waggling frenzy.

It's rare to find a quality scrolling shoot-em-up available as shareware, but that's what this is. A group of four Aussie students working under the banner Interscan spent their spare time putting this together – and they certainly didn't use AMOS.

Pure machine code, that's what's needed for this sort of game. And that's what they've used for smooth scrolling, fast action and pretty graphics. Plot, style, background – who needs them? Just grab a joystick and start blasting.

The infuriating thing about this game is the control. Sometimes it's an awful, shuddering mess, making it more difficult to control your spacecraft. However, this does add a certain random element to is a fairly predictable genre. I've certainly enjoyed blasting away on it for a few hours. And when you're bored of the first 1Mb level, you can try the next.

Continued on page 192

JARGON BUSTING – WHAT IS PD?

Software in the Public Domain, or PD software, is marked out by the fact that it can be freely distributed. You are allowed to copy PD software from anyone and to give copies to anyone. It is widely available from small firms called PD libraries and also from bulletin boards that you can connect to if you have a modem.

It's programmed by enthusiasts who want to share their work and it comes in various flavours. The basic kind is 'freeware', which is completely free. Another common kind is 'shareware' – the programmer asks you to send a small fee if you like the program, in return for which he or she will often help you with any problems you may have or send you any updated versions of the program.

Another kind of PD is 'licenceware', for which a charge is made – it's akin to very cheap commercial software and uses PD libraries for distribution, but it can be very good value.

If you copy a PD disk, you are under a moral obligation to leave the disk exactly as it is, especially the 'read me' files which explain how the program is used and give the programmer credit for all the hard work.

The price of a PD disk from a library is usually around £2, so it's a great way to buy games, utilities and applications if you're on a limited budget. You can also get some superb demos which show off the Amiga's ability to produce stunning graphics and music sequences.

GOLDEN OLDIES 2

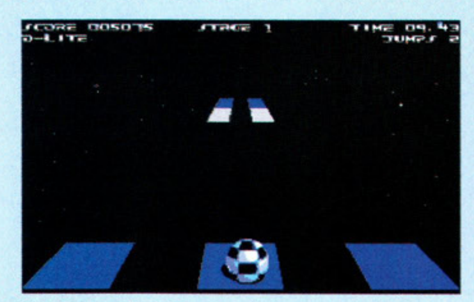
GAME

17 BIT 2031

Most of the games on this disk have been available for quite a while – the first three even started out on the ***Amiga Format*** Coverdisk. So *Croak* by Selwyn Stevens, *Mouthman* by M J Barker and *Biplanes* by Peter Mason should be familar to many of you. *Drip* from Art Stiles is years old, and *Squamble* from John Kennedy remains the only *Scramble* clone available for the Amiga.

However, the best game by far on the disk (and one totally new to me) is *Jump N Roll*, by D-Lite. Based on the old C64 classic *Trailblazer*, you control a ball rolling along a 3D road. The road is made up of coloured squares – the different colours have different effects, such as making you bounce and slowing you down.

Jump N Roll is the reason why this month's PD section was nearly not written – it's such an addictive game. You fight against the clock to reach the end of a stage before progressing to the next. Graphically the game is rock solid, using the Amiga's custom hardware to best effect. Excuse me, I've just got to get back to it...



The *Golden Oldies 2* compendium contains addiction galore in the shape of *Jump N Roll*.

ALCHEMY TRAILBLAZER

GAME

17 BIT 2100

Another version of *Trailblazer*, this one from Vision Beyond, doesn't quite have the gloss of the D-Lite version. The overall playability is just as good though, and it does have a two-player version. It also lets you control your ball with joystick, mouse or keyboard. Fans of two-player games should definitely go for this version.

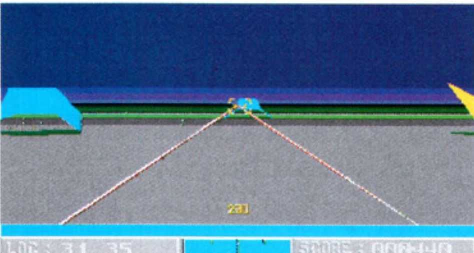


Two-player trailblazing makes for fun competition against human friend or foe.

NEBULA

GAME

ANGLIA G6026



There's nowt nebulous about the ripping action in *Nebula*, and there's plenty to get your head around too.

A spot of 3D blasting anyone? Actually there's a bit more to *Nebula* than meets the eye, but if lightning-fast 3D laser wars are your thing, check this out. The game is set on Europa, one of Jupiter's moons. Actually it's been renamed Uropa, and is in bad shape after a particularly nasty intergalactic war.

To stabliize the planet, a huge powerplant was installed. However, it's now being undermined by 10 energy rigs, put there by nasties called Kapones. In two hours the moon will disintegrate, so you have to seek and destroy the energy rigs within that time.

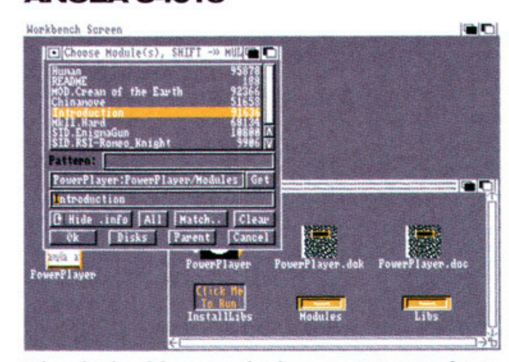
You have a map showing the locations of the rigs, but they are guarded by fighter craft, are impervious to laser fire, but can be destroyed by a well-placed bomb.

This is a truly outstanding game. It's great fun to shoot up the enemy fighters and takes some planning to destroy all the energy rigs before the time limit. Third, placing and detonating the bombs takes skill. As a game, *Nebula* is tremendous, if a little short-term. As PD it's an absolute blast. Authors Stephen J Smith and Paul Y Goulding can feel very proud of their creation.

POWER PLAYER

TOOL

ANGLIA U4016









Why whistle while you work when your Amiga can play up a storm with *Power Player*?

If you collect Amiga music tracks, you'll no doubt be aware that there are a great many different formats in which to store them.

This is a real pain, as you have to have the tracker with which the music was created in order to play it back again. Stephen Fuhrmann has created a music player program that supports by far the greatest number of trackers.

Power Player supports *SidMon*, *Sound Mon*, *Noisetracker* 1.3 (and so *Protracker* 1.1b too), *Mark II*, *MED*, *Oktalyzer* four-voice, *Delta Music*, *TFMX*, *Future Composer* 1.4, *ProTracker*, *Jam Cracker*, *StarTrakker* four-voice, *Fred* and *Noise Packer* 2.03 music modules. Is that enough for you?

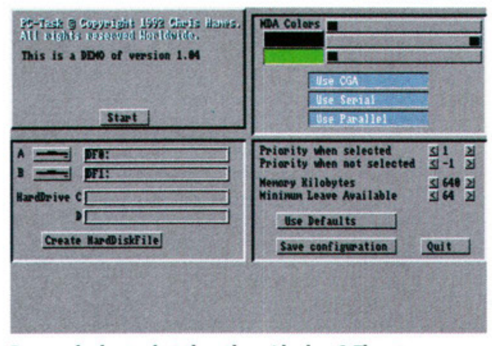
Using it is so easy – just find the module with the supplied file requester, double-click on it and abrakableep! It starts playing.

Modules can be stacked up to play contiuous melodies, so if you want a little light music while you're Workbenching away, *Power Player* could be just the ticket.

PC TASK

TOOL

ANGLIA U4017



Fancy a look at what the other side does? Then turn your Amiga into a PC with *PC Task*.

Want a really cheap PC emulator? Look no further! This is a demo of the full emulator, but with it you can boot up MS-DOS and use PC disks and programs. It can't do things like format PC disks or use a printer – for that you'll need the full version which you can get from Chris Hames, the programmer, who wrote the *Degrader* utility featured on last month's ***Amiga Format*** coverdisk.

The spec is good. PC Task can put up CGA four-colour graphics, but they do slow down your machine. It also supports using an Amiga hard drive partition as a PC hard disk and you can even set up a file on a hard disk to use as a pseudo PC hard disk, in a very similar manner to a Commodore Bridgeboard.

The Amiga mouse is set up as a Microsoft PC mouse too – and the mouse pointer never disappears. This is probably the best software-only PC emulator that you can get these days – although I would recommend getting the full program because it comes with a more thorough manual and is optimized to use faster processors. Quite wonderful I would say, yes.

TOP TEN UTILITIES OF THE MONTH

Every month, we look at the best-selling utility and game PD disks from a particular library, so you can see what's popular...

ANGLIA PD

1	PC Task
2	Amiga Tutorial
3	Virus Checker V6.06
4	Power Logo
5	DCopy 2
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9	HD Click & File Minder
10	Structured Clip Art

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24 PIN PRINTERS

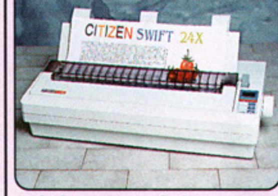


192 CPS **80** COLUMN

- *Citizen 224 - 24 pin - 80 column*
- *192cps Draft, 64cps LQ*
- *8K Printer Buffer + 4 Fonts*
- *Parallel Interface*
- *Graphics Resolution: 360 x 360dpi*
- *Epson and IBM Emulation*
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- *FREE Silica Printer Starter Kit*

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SAVING: £133
SILICA PRICE: £199





192 CPS **136** COLUMN

- *Citizen Swift 24x - 24 pin - 136 column*
- *192cps Draft, 64cps NLQ*
- *8K Printer Buffer + 4 Fonts*
- *Parallel Interface*
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INKJET PRINTER



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- *50 Nozzle Head - Whisper Quiet 47dB(A)*
- *8K Printer Buffer + 3 Fonts*
- *Optional HP Compatible Font cards*
- *Parallel Interface*
- *Graphics Resolution: 300x300dpi*
- *HP Deskjet plus emulation*

RRP £496
TOTAL VALUE: £496
SAVING: £137
SILICA PRICE: £359



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CITIZEN PN 48

64 CPS **80** COLUMN

- *Citizen PN48 Notebook Printer*
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RRP £325
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This starter kit will help you to get you up and running with your new Citizen dot matrix printer from Silica Systems.

- 3½" Disk - Amiga & ST Drivers
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- 2 Metre Parallel Printer Cable
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- 100 Continuous Address Labels
- 5 Continuous Envelope

If you already own a printer, and would like to buy a kit, you may order one (ref: KIT 5001) for £19.38 - £10 off RRP!

AMIGA PRINT MANAGER WORTH £14.10

The Amiga Print Manager dramatically enhances printed output. Provides drivers for all Citizen printers and replaces Amiga's normal printer preference system - printing is quicker, colours more vibrant, graphics less fuzzy. Easy to use with instructions.

Features include:

- Improved Image Smoothing
- Gamma/Colour Correction
- Image Scaling
- Colour Separation
- Reduces/Illiminates Banding

The Amiga Print Manager is available free on request from Silica Systems with the Swift 9, 224 and 240 printers, or may be purchased (ref: ASC 4572) for £13.10 (RRP £14.10).

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PRA 1228	124D/224/Swift 9/24	£42.00

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PN48 ACCESSORIES

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Accessories prices inc. VAT & delivery

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PD Demo Zone

Whatever way you turn in **Amiga Format**, you will always arrive at the Public Domain section. Whether it's music, graphics or animation you want, this is where you'll find it - and it's mostly free, free, free! **Andy Nuttall** sifts through this month's offerings, and sorts out the gods from the mere mortals...

TWO TOMS - SHAKE YOUR HEAD — MUSIC

17 BIT, DISK 2094 (THREE DISKS)
REQUIRES TWO DRIVES



A certain Mouse takes some very dubious jelly beans and meets his *doppelganger*. Take 'em away, Walt!

Now and again a demo will take everybody by storm because of its imagination, style, wit and original techniques. Well, erm, this isn't an example of that phenomena. Instead it's another massively unoriginal Two Toms demo, consisting of three disks packed with stationary animation and some sampled music.

So which poor suckers have the duo picked on this month? Yes, it's those madcap chartbusters Was (Not Was), and their latest single *Shake Your Head*. The music is of the rather bland dance variety - so dull, in fact, that they added some celebrities to liven it up a bit. (OK, you can understand using Kim Basinger - at least this makes the video look good - but Ozzy Osbourne? It takes a warped mind to even imagine it...)

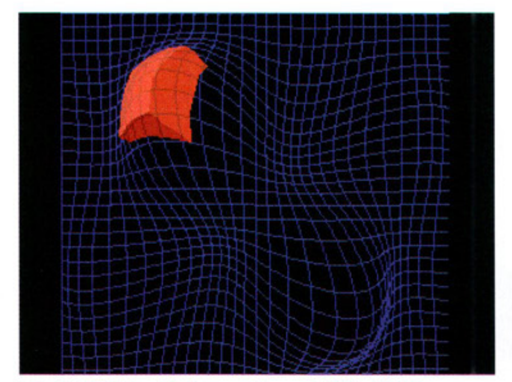
Here, though, there is not even so much as a digitised picture of Ms Basinger to liven up the proceedings. Instead, you get a hand-drawn picture of Mickey Mouse! Hardly titillating stuff (unless your name's Minnie) and nothing to do with the demo.

I'm sorry Two Toms, but if you must release digitised music on disk then at least liven it up with some relevant digitised graphics or a bit of simple animation. Anything, anything at all would do. *Shake Your Head*? More like bang it against the nearest wall.

HALF-BRAINS - SUNSTONE



17 BIT, DISK 2036 (TWO DISKS)



What's this? A pair of surreal breasts being lightly massaged by a pink sponge? Or is it just 'wrapped vectors'?

After loading up this demo, my first reaction was 'Oh, no! Another scrolling demo!' and I almost turned my Amiga off. I mean, how many of these things do you have to watch before you've seen 'em all? Sunstone, as with all the rest, consists of many different parts, and most of them have been done before – animated real-time vector points, flashy fractals and so on.

There is one part, though, which uses quite an original technique. The Half-Brains team call it 'wrapped vectors', and it basically consists of a rotating cube which moves around the screen distorting in different ways depending on its position – an effect similar to that of a fish-eye lens. This routine is excellent, and more than makes up for the lack of originality elsewhere in the demo. With a few arcade-style games and a quick quiz to finish off, this demo is both entertaining and fun. Check it out if you can.

DYNAMIC HI-RES SLIDESHOW 2 — DEMO

NBS, DISK S585

Dynamic Hi-Res is a system invented by a company called NewTek with an art package called *DigiView 4*. It's a screen mode, similar to HAM, which utilises the Amiga's Blitter chip to create a huge on-screen colour palette.

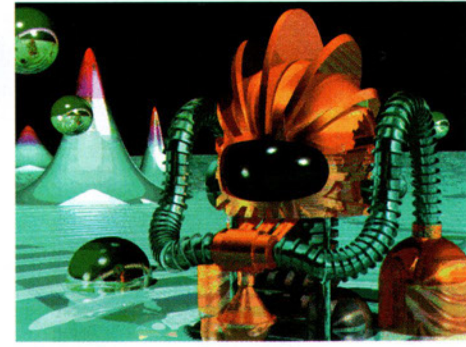
Although I've never seen *Dynamic Slideshow 1*, I can safely say that this is the best graphics slideshow I have ever seen on the Amiga. The disk contains only four hi-res pictures, but each is extremely detailed, and very colourful. Three of the screens show the inside of a large room from different angles, with some excellent marble pillars, stone wildcats and metallic flying fish (!).

The other shows a surreal, metallic, well, helmet I suppose - it's difficult to say exactly what it is! Anyway, it looks pretty fabdacious, and is technically superb.

Sonic Developments, the authors, have shown a lot of imagination here - it's difficult to believe that even a powerful machine such as an A500 can produce such work. This is a demo that will make all your unconverted friends turn green, and want to go out immediately and buy an Amiga.



This bizarre picture is entitled 'Diver'. Very clever, but what the heck is it? Answers on a postcard, please...



Fish. Woah! Tree. Woah! Fence, pillar, pot, steps - they're all here, but where's the hat-stand? Wibble.

TERMINATION ZONE '92 — DEMO

17 BIT, DISK 2106

All of the decent demos this month seem to be graphics-orientated, and *Termination Zone* is no exception. The artist, Cyber, actually makes a note saying there is no music on the disk because he can't write any! At least he's honest. The graphics, however, are excellent.



So who is the law around here yah boney beggar? With a mighty roar, our hero readies himself for a light snack.

Each screen has been hand drawn using *DPaint IV*, and depicts one of several comic-book characters such as Wolverine and Batman. They manage to capture the feel of the original artwork very well, with some good use of colour. Because the pictures are high-resolution,

Continued Page 198

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PG066/67 NETHACK D&D Adventure needs 2 drives
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PG069 NU GAME Mega Shoot em up with good graphics
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PG076 SEVEN TILES Speedball type game-MEGA!
PG079 SEALANCE A submarine strategy game +
PG081 SERENE II Follow up to the above game +
PG093 TENNIS Good game (Some language) 1mg
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PG101 THE INSIDERS CLUB Stocks & shares game
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PU003 A68K 68000 Assember program
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PA043 ERIC-S MORE AEROTOONS Very witty !!!+
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PA045 ERIC-S STEALTHY II Mig-29 vs Stealthy !+
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PA053/4 LIGHT CYCLES (2) Tron animation+
PA056 MAGICIAN II Good RT animation+
PA059 MR POTATO HEAD Potato man in cabaret! +
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PA075 THE WALKER vs A2000 A classic ! +
PA077 UNICYCLE ANIM Super anim of unicycle & car! +
PA079 MR POTATO HEAD 2 Another fab Chris Hill anim! +
PA080 LEMMINGS ANIMATION Very funny indeed
PA082 TIN TOY ANIMATION Ray traced tin soldier! +
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PA085 JET ANIMATION Fractal Flight but better! +
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AGA31 PORCHE car rising from a table, superb 1M +
AGA36 BIRD OF PREY an excellent animation 1m +
AGA37 TOBIAS GOES KNACKERS-Check this out! 1m+

POWERANIMS

PP001/2 ANTI LEMMINGS (2) This is Brilliant! 2M
PP003 AT THE MOVIES Cute anim of Amy squirrel 1.5M
PP004/7 AUTOMATED LIGHT (4) Battlestar galactica! 3M
PP008/10 BUZZED (3) Great anim of wasp crashing! 2M
PP011/12 DATING GAME (2) Very witty!, Get it. 3.5M!
PP016 GULF WAR Another ES production! Good 2M!
PP017 JUGGLER II Juggler meets Ms Juggler! Fab! 1.5M
PP018/20 LOST IN SPACE (3) From the TV series 2M
PP021/24 LANDING (4) Tobias Richter poweranim 4M!
PP025/27 STATION AT KHARN (3) Incredible 2M demo
PP028/33 UPGRADE (6) Massive 5 mg animation!!
PP 034/5 VAUX KILLERS (2) An old but good anim 2M!
PP036/7 WALKER DEMO (2) A 2mg version of a classic
PP038/9 WAVE SAILING (2) Nice anim of wave sailor 1.5M
PP040/43 AT THE MOVIES II (4) Hilarious ! 1mg>3mg
PP044/45 AMY V WALKER II (2) Another witty ES demo 3M
PP046 SWEET REVENGE Coyote vs Roadrunner ! 1.5mg+
PP047 GOTTA GO Crazy dog walks his master? 1.5mg +
PP048/9 A DAY AT THE BEACH Stunning ! 2 Mg
PP050 UNSPORTING Wicked aerotoon from Schwartz+ 2M

DEMOS

PD016 BUDBRAIN II Hilarious megademo !
PD018 CHAOS ROCK Fab light show with fractals! +
PD020 CRIONICS MEGADEMO maddona demo & more
PD021 CRIONICS NEVERWHERE Real world demo
PD033 DEVILS NO REALITY multipart demo !+
PD046 IRAQ DEMO Amusing demo with Saddam
PD068 PHENOMENA ENIGMA Absolutely brilliant! +
PD069 PHENOMENA JOYRIDE Very good demo !
PD076 PLASMUTEX Good plasma & great music +
PD077 PMC ALPHA OMEGA Superb vector demo+
PD078 PUGGS IN SPACE Witty cartoon demo
PD094 SCOOPEX MENTAL HANGOVER A classic+
PD097 SILENTS GLOBAL TRASH Incredible!!+
PD098 SILENTS ICE Brilliant Fx & music!
PD108 TOMSOFT TRIP TO MARS 3D trip to mars!
PD109 TOMSOFT VIRTUAL WORLDS An absolute Epic !
PD113 VANGELIS DEMO Fab music & color cycling! +
PD119 REBELS OUTLAND Good demo fron them !
PD123 IB MANGA Nice Japanese style cartoons!
PD124 ANDROMEDA DECAYING PARADISE Good! +
PD125 RAY OF HOPE 2 Great ! good music & graphics!
PD129 RAZOR 1911 VOYAGE Very good fx and music
PD130/34 ALCATRAZ ODDESSY Awesome !!! Get this !!!
PD135/6 CRIONICS HARDWIRED Very impressive demo!!!
PD138 SEEING IS BELIEVING Excellent demo & music
PD141 WILDFIRE MEGADEMO great House & dance music
PD143 CAT Silents & Crionics demo for cat club +
PD145 NECRONOMIA Excellent demo, if bit freaky ! +
PD146 DOS Excellent vectors & music demo +
PD147 HARDCORE Anarchy's cool new demo
PD148 CHAMELEON A new vector world demo,
PD149 MAGNETIC DREAMS Excellent new demo
PD150 TSL PARTY WINNERS Music & gfx - Superb
PD151 TERMINATOR 3 Interesting ripoff of the movie
PD152 HUMAN TARGET Wicked Rave/vector demo Get it!
PD153 DEFORMATION with the men from the MTV demo
PD154 GET FROGGED You'll love this, just get it !!
PD155 MULTICA Wicked demo from andromeda Get it !!!
PD156/7 REAL EMPATHY Good Demo & Fab game inc. !
PD158 DIGITAL PUNISHER Very good BlitterZoom Fx

MUSIC DISKS

PM010 AMEGA PARTY WINNERS Four WICKED songs+
PM012 AMIGADEUS CLASSICAL Eine Kleiner etc. +
PM014 BANGING RAVES kickin remix of house
PM016 BEATLES SONIX Nice music +
PM019 BRUNO's MUSIC BOX II Superb jazz funk music +
PM020/21 BRUNOS MUSIC BOX III Jazzfunk. Get it ! +
PM022/23 CLASSICAL MUSIC Bach, Handel etc +
PM030/34 DIGITAL CONCERTs 2-6 Excellent house/dance
PM059 MANIACS OF NOISE This is brilliant!+
PM067 POPEYE MEETS BEACHBOYS Hilarious! +
PM069 RAZOR FACE ANOTHER DAY very good !!!
PM070 RHAPSODY IN BLUE tracked by Rob Baxter! 1M
PM071/72 SILENTS BLUES HOUSE (2) Music & game+
PM074 SOUND OF SILENTS Jut get this its mega!
PM079 TECHNOTRONIX REMIX Good remixes etc.
PM082a/82b VIVALDI - FOUR SEASONS (2) V.Good !+
PM087/88 HIS MASTERS NOISE by Mahoney & Kaktus
PM090/91 MOZART HORN CONCERTO'S 4 by H.Gannon +
PM092 PIANO TUNES Nine piano songs- good +
PM096 STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN Rendition of the song+
PM100/103 MANIC RAVES II Fantastic rave stuff !
PM104 500 THINGS COMEBACK 4 great rave type tracks+
PM105/6 KEFRENS MEGAMIX Fabulous dance music+
PM112 TECHOMANIA II 8 essential hardcore tunes+
PM113 PROTON GATES OF TIME 6 good pieces of music+
PM114 UPROAR SPLIT BEAVER MIX rave megamix +
PM115a/b CHROME Brilliant music disks !+
PM116 LIONS GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH Very good!
PM117 MUZAK OF THE WORLD original Amiga music! +
PM118 TSP RIPPED MUSIC 1 Some good tracks+
PM119 TSP RIPPED MUSIC 2 MOre of above+
PM120 IDEAL MODE AEROSOL EP Go raving mad +
PM121 NIGHTBREED MUSIC DEMO 8 Rave music demo +
PM122/4 PLAYSID 2 (3) You must get this !!!!! +
PM125 PLAYSID inc.RobHubbard, ManiacsOfNoise +
PM126/9 LSD MUSIC PACK (4)A Excellent music collection+
PM130/2 BACH BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS 1 to 6 +
PM133 DANCE TRANCE Rave tracks played amiga style.
PM134/5 SOUNDS OF SCIENCE (2) Absolutely Brilliant!+
PM136 WICKED HOUSE Superb rave music by origin.
PM137 KEFRENS MEGAMIX II Very good !! dance music +
PM138 EROTICA 6 Mega music ! inc crocketts theme ! +
PM139/40 SPRING MELODIES (2) 9 tracks fron anarchy
PM141 HARDLINE MUSIC 7 groovy synth-style tracks +
PM142 FRACTAL MUSIC Very well presented !! get it!
PM143 FALCONS MUSICBOX 2 Average music disk+

SLIDESHOWS

PS002 ADVANCE HAM Really stunning !+
PS008 AIRCRAFT SLIDE Pics of fighter aircraft! +
PS009 ASTRONOMY SLIDE very impressive !
PS013 BORN TO BE FREE wild animals +
PS014/15 BUTTERFLIES (2) High quality !+
PS019 COLOURCYCLES Neat fx ! +
PS025/26 DIVINE VISIONS (2) Mythological+
PS030 FRAXION FUTURE VISION fantasy pics+
PS033 GERMAN RAY TRACE Superb See these !+
PS069/70 SILENTS/CH 42 (2) This is superb!+
PS072 SUPER HAM CARS This is a must-Mega!+
PS086 SONIC 5 Superb D-HAM 4096 colour pics+
PS087 ALTERED DECEPTIONS Chris hills super work+
PS088 EVOLUTION SLIDE Excellent educational pics+
PS090 FRACTALGEN Incredible fractals etc +
PS091/2 FRACTAL MOUNTAINS Excellent stuff!+
PS093 VANISH 3D Awesome 3d ray traced +
PS094 INVISIBLE WORLD II Yuk Bedbugs And more !+
PS095 TOTAL CONCEPTS SLIDE Pics of forthcoming CLR+
PS096/97 GALLOWEEN Excellent new slideshow
PS098 NEWTYPE SLIDE Japanese cartoon style
PS099 ARTO IKOLA SLIDES digipics: Cats, ladies +
PS100 ACE & DR BLOOD Good Real 3D pictures! +
PS101 ANALOGUE SLIDE Ray traced space pics +
PS102 ACCESS DESIGN Ray traced space pics +

MUSIC UTILS

PT001 ALGORYTHMS Create weird midi tunes
PT002 ART OF MED Excellent !+
PT004 ASI AUDIO MAGIC 2 good compilation
PT005 CASIO CZ EDITOR 250 patches ! +
PT006 DELUXE MUSIC DATA Midi music
PT009 K1 IFF SAMPLES Fabulous samples +
PT013 MED 3.2 Excellent music seq. +
PT014 MED MUSIC DISK As it says !+
PT015 MIDI DISK Various midi stuff +
PT016 NOISETRACKER 4 channel sequencer
PT017 NOISETRACKER EXECUTABLE Create standalones!
PT018 PERFECTSOUND SAMPLER Nice sample editor
PT019 ROLAND D110 + S220 Converter program
PT020 ST-01 - ST-10 Samples--Ring for details
PT021 SOUNDTRACKER 2.6 Excellent, ok plus!+
PT024 ST-80 BEAST SAMPLES very nice +
PT025/6/7/8 ST-90-93 SAMPLES DISKS Studio quality+
PT030 YAMAHA DX7 VOICE SORTER
PT031/2/3 ST-87 - 89 3 disk full !+
PT034/5 ST-97 & 98 More samples !+
PT036 SAMPLE MAKER create synthetic samples
PT037 PROTRACKER 2.0 The bees Knees !!!
PT038 YAMAHA DX100,TX81Z, DX27,DX11 & FB01 editors
PT039 SUPER SOUND 2 Add reverb & Fx to samples+
PT040 OCTAMED V1 8 channel MED sequencer!+
PT041 NOISEPLAYER 4.0 Multitasking module player+
PT042 START IFF SAMPLES Superb ! Get this disk!!!!

AMOS PD

APD036 AMOS UPATER Latest updater !!! v1.34 +
APD076 RAINBOW WARRIOR Paint your own copperlists
APD083 AMOS PAINT V3.7 Paint in 2-64 colours.+
APD096 PAIR IT Match the cards to make a pair+
APD103/4 PICK UP A PUZZLE Solve jigsaw puzzles+
APD110 CROSSFIRE Nice game, for the kids !+
APD115 BALLOONACY Bomb the buildings !+
APD176 DATABASE MASTER V2.0 Good database+
APD180/1 DUNGEON DELVER maze game - Good!+
APD230 AMOS ASTEROIDS 4 types of asteroids!!+
APD237 SHAPES Excellent kids game !+
APD257 CASSETTE LABELLER + MIXED SOURCE+
APD271 WIZARDS DOMAIN graphical adventure+
APD292 WAR OF THE FOUR graphic adventure game+
APD293 GRAND PRIX SIMULATON Very popular
APD329 FRUIT MACHINE Good for the gamblers !+
APD347 NOTEBOOK & SHOPPING LIST Easy to use !+
APD363 FAMILY HISTORY DATABASE Latest version!+
APD373 COMPILER 1.34 UPDATE Amos compiler !+

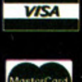
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PG170 ASI GAMES 25 Another mega collection - Buy it ! +
PG171 ASI GAMES 26 Superpacman 92 Smash tv Ashido +
PG172 ASI GAMES 27 Addictive card games. Really good!+
PG173 GHOSTSHIP A very nice 3D Freescape type game!
PG174 AMOS CRICKET Shareware cricket game,1 or 2plr+
PG175 SPACETRAX A 2 player shoot each other up game+
PG176 TECHNOBAN GAME Quite a nice puzzle game! +
PG177 HELLZONE Stunning R-type clone-GET THIS! +
PG178 MENTAL IMAGE 2 Three Excellent new games +
PG179 BLOB A tricky game written in ShootEmUp Kit +
PG180 SECTOR 1 A nice game similar to alien breed +
PG181 STRIKEBALL Baseball type game done in Amos +
PG182 ETHOS Simple graphical adventue Sinbad style +
PG183 CATACOOMBS A great D&D style game. VG.GFX +
PG184 FATAL MISSION Very good Shootemup game +
PG185 ARAZMAX Similar to the game microbes. Good +
PG186 ASI 28 Doody, DrMario, Invaders2, Madbomber2+
PG187 ASI 29 DOG, Rome, Nova, B-Bal, Atax, Quadrix+

KICK OFF PLAYERS !

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G913 Wimbledon, Chelsea, Leeds, Sheffield Wed, Southampton, Spurs, Arsenal, QPR

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G916 SCOTLAND: Rangers, Celtic, Hearts, Dundee Utd, Aberdeen, St JohnSt, Airdrie, Dunfirmline

G917 SCOTLAND: Hibs, Motherwell, Falkirk, St Mirren, Celic, Rangers, Aberdeen, Hearts

NEW UTILITIES

PU209 FRED FISH CATALOGUE contains FISH 1 - 670 +
PU210 PCQ PASCAL Latest version of this Pascal compiler+
PU211 AMIGA PUNT A horse race predicting program!!! +
PU212 PERM CHECK PLUS This is a pools prediction prog
PU213 RACE RATER Another horse racing program!! +
PU214 DIR WORK A Sid type file copying program! +
PU215 CAPTIONATOR Superb shareware video titling! +
PU216 WBASE 1.3 A multitasking workbench database! +
PU217 BROTHERHOOD UTILS 2 More utilities for the plus!+
PU218 ORDER Excellent demo of this commercial Dbase+
PU219 WBHACKS+ Good collection of hacks for + owners
PU220 HUNTERSOFT GFX Convert B/w pics to color
PU221-225 8 COLOR ICONS Hundreds of new icons +
PU226/7 C-EYES FONTS For use in Dpaint, WB, etc.(2) +
PB028 LITTLE OFFICE Integrated Wpro,S/Sht,Dbase,Gfx +

NEW MUSIC

PM144 BOUNCER Remix of the song by Kicks like a mule!
PM145 PARADISE TECHNO POWER Great techno music !
PM146/7 ROLLING Good music on a false workbench!!! (2)
PM148/9 DRUMS & REVERB Exellent synth type music!! (2)
PM150 DESKTOP HARPSICHORD RECITAL Classics! +
PM151 INTENSE RAVE VISION A very good rave music !!
PM152 PARADISE: NO BRAIN NO PAIN Good for ravers!! +
PM153 BIZE: KILL DA BABE 6 tracks of rave music!! +
PM154 PULSE Yes, pulsating rave music again!! +
PM155 VINE G-RAVE 5 more good rave tracks!!! +
PM156 VIOLENCE PHONOBOMB Four good tracks +

NEW DEMOS

PD159 ANARCHY IN THE KITCHEN Some good FX Fab!+
PD160 ANDROMEDA POINT BLANK Crazy polygon effects
PD161 BRONX MEGADEMO II Several sections to this!
PD162 ALCHEMY MARCHWITH Very good new demo+
PD163 GUARDIAN DRAGON 2 NEW demo from Kefrens
PD164 DESIRE MENACE Good Psycho rave demo +
PD165 DARK DEMON Mega new demo .... get it+
PD166 PALACE LINUS Like the 7Up Ad on TV +
PD167 ANALOG FALLEN Excellent demo +
PD168 MELON DEZIGN 808 A classy new demo
PD169 BIG BANG Excellent spacey-type demo+
PD170 PEICE OF MIND Good 3D vector effects. +
PD171/2 SILENTS EXPOSE(2) Incredible Get it !+
PD173 EXIT MEGADEMO 3 Another very good demo

NEW ANIMATIONS

PA091/3 GAS TURBINE, STEAM & PETROL ENGINE (3)+
PA094 AMY JOGS,WALKS & SNEEZES by Eric Schwartz! +
PA095 HOW TO RUN INTO A WALL by Eric Schwartz! +
PA096 OH NO MORE CLASSY ANIMS The last chuck? +
PA097 A SMALL STATION AT KHERNE New 1mg version+
PA098 EASTER ISLAND ANIM A nice fractal animation!+
PA099 ATF AGILITY new ES anim, very witty as usual+
PA100 VTOL CONTEST Check out this new ES anim ! +

NEW ... ALPHA GRAPH ... NEW

Alpha graph is a brand new CLR graphing program for business or home use, please ring for more details £3.50 +

NEW-FRESHWATER FISH-NEW

CLE07 Freshwater fish is the latest in the series from Total Concepts, the people who brought you Solar System, this subject covers a Freshwater Fish,a fascinating subject for young and old alike. If you enjoyed the Total concepts series then you will also enjoy this title. + Comatible. 2 Disks £4.50

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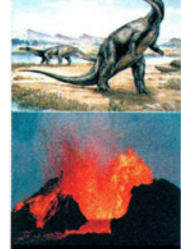
Here's a selection of some of the BEST pocket power titles All for Only £2.99 each!

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POW002 **MOUSETRAP** Cutesey platform fun
POW003 **QUANTOX+** Fair shootemup
POW004 **BATTLEVALLY** Strategy shootemup
POW005 **JUMPJET+** Simple Flight Sim
POW006 **SLAYER** Good mindles blast
POW007 **STEEL** Explore&Blast. Good Gfx
POW008 **ARGIPELIGOS** Classic Puzzle game
POW009 **BAD COMPANY** Great spaceharrier Clone
POW010 **EYE OF HORRIS** Platform game
POW011 **PROSPECTOR** Tricky Maze game
POW012 **STARBLAZE+** Star wars type game
POW013 **STARGOOSE+** Excellent ShootEmUp
POW014 **STAR RAY** Defender clone - Get it !
POW015 **CHICAGO 90** Isometric 3D car chase
POW016 **DEMOLITION** Average Breakout game
POW017 **DOGS OF WAR+** IkariWarriors type - good!
POW018 **HATE+** Isometric 3D ShootEmUp - Great!
POW019 **BATTLESHIPS 1-2** Player Classic
POW020 **MANHATTAN DEALERS+** Great BeatEmUp game

THESE GAMES ARE WELL WORTH CHECKING OUT !!!!

New .. The Central Licenseware Register .. New

Commercial Quality programs at a PD price !



CLE01 TOTAL CONCEPTS DINOSAURS Have your children ever wanted to know about the ancient world of the dinasaur ? If so, then this is for you - an interactive encyclopedia covering jurassic, triassic & createaceous periods complete with pictures and information. This program is plus compatible and comes on 2 Disks. £4.50 +

CLE02 TOTAL CONCEPTS GEOLOGY Thit title is the second in the series of quality programs by Chris hill, using the GoldDisk Hyperbook system, and will you and your children an interactive guided tour through the incredible world volcanos, rocks and minerals. the program is very simple to use just point and click. Geology is on 2 Disks £4.50 +

CLE03 TOTAL CONCEPTS SOLAR SYSTEM Now our most popular title ! This one invites you to learn all about the solar system, with information on all of the planets & systems with pictures supplied by Nasa, this is a superb educational package for children & adults. This title is so big it is supplied on Three disks and is priced at only £4.99. +

CLE04 KIDDIES COLOURING PAD This is a colouring book for young children and they wont get in a mess using it ! It is very simple to use with full instructions with the program. Simply pick a picture and colour it in ! Includes a save option, so once you have coloured you picture you can save it out to a disk to print out using Dpaint etc. Price £3.50 +

CLE05 A-CHORD So you want become the next Eric Clapton then this is just what you need ! This program will teach you nearly every single guitar chord including fingering techiniques, it will even *play* the chords using the amigas built in sound chip. A must for every single guitar player beginner and experts alike. Price £3.50 +

SMOOTH SCROLLING TITLES

created with VIDEO TITLES

CLU01 VIDEO TITLER is a program that will allow you to create smooth scrolling video titles with the greatest of ease, programmed by Darren Mccaul, whose Starbase is due out soon, the program lets you use any amiga bitmap font, of which several are supplied, and scroll in any colour vertically up the screen. Essential for all video enthusiasts. £3.50 +



CLU02 FISH INDEXER If you have ever wanted a program, but have never been able to find it ANYWHERE chances are it's probably in the fish library, but rather than having to rake through thousands of lines of text, why not use the Fish indexer, a superb database of the entire Fred Fish library, with full search, print and more.Price £3.50+

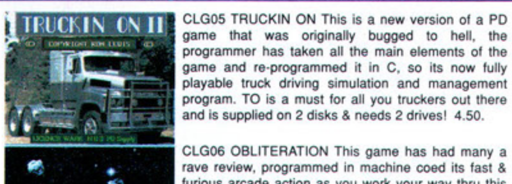
CLU03 TYPING TUTOR A program here now for all you budding office clerks, learning to type can be a real pain, lessons cost a fortune, but not when you have an amiga ! This program will take you step by step through a full typing course, showing where to place your fingers and lots more. Before long you'll be able to type as fast as I can ! Price £3.50 +

CLG01 NORRIS A machine code programmed platform adventure starring Norris, help him journey his way through level after level battling beastly beasts and monstrous medieval men ! This game has a great atmosphere, and is immensley playable, it will have you addicted in minutes !
Price £3.50

CLG02 DARK THINGS Another excellent quality platform game along similar lines to MarioLand, you know - scrolly along, then run & jump kind of thing, so your kids will love it, we did, and we're just a bunch of of kids at heart ! Price £3.50 +

CLG03 PHASE 2 Superb sideways scrolling shoot em up, along similar lines to the all time classic defender, anyway you control a photon powered XZ-1B fighter and you must battle with the forces of evil ! The gameplay is brilliant and the scrolling and animation silky smooth, if you want my advice - buy it. Price £3.50 +

CLG04 X-SYSTEM This is a corker a superb multilevel shootemup, you know the type, balst your way through hoard after hoard of aliens and end of level guardians, it even has a built in platform game thrown into he bargain, programmed by the BadBoyz this is one of the best shootemups about, get it and prepare to be impressed. price £3.50 +



CLG05 TRUCKIN ON This is a new version of a PD game that was originally bugged to hell, the programmer has taken all the main elements of the game and re-programmed it in C, so its now fully playable truck driving simulation and management program. TO is a must for all you truckers out there and is supplied on 2 disks & needs 2 drives! 4.50.

OBLITERATION

CLG06 OBLITERATION This game has had many a rave review, programmed in machine coed its fast & furious arcade action as you work your way thru this asteroid infested game, blasting wave after wave of rocks, this game is utterly addictive and includes a bonus game MAD BOMBER which is as addictive as the main game. A must for all gamers ! Price £3.50



CLG07 WILLYS WATER WORKS If its puzzle games you like then we've got just what you want, you control willy, a plumber, whose job it is to built a pipeline using the pipes he has before the water starts to flow, and this certainly isnt as easy as it sounds ! A superb little game that will have you and you kids(?) entertained for hours. £3.50



CLG08 DRAGON TILES This is an excellent puzzle game you have a huge stack of different icons which, using the mouse you must match up to make a level disappear, sounds boring but its actually very addictive, I was playing it for hours ! A Vast improvement on the PD version, Dragon tiles is well worth anyones couple of quid ! Price £3.50 +

CLG09 MOTOR DUEL Now this is just fabulous ! Martin would not leave this game alone for days, its a 3D car racing-chasing-shooting game, with guided missles and lasers, its by the same programmer as the PD game Battlecars, but its a lot better, play the computer (Mega difficult) or link up to anoth amiga for 1 on 1 action ! Price £3.50 +

NEW IN .... T.A.M.I .... NEW IN

CLE06 The Amos Maths Instructor, superb maths tutorial covering all sorts of subjects including trig, Quadratic, Simultanious, Inequalities, Volumes, Area, Vat & Interest and more. an excellent aid for GCSE students. Price £3.50 +

PROGRAMMERS : Have you written a good game, utility or educational program ? Why not send it in for evaluation ? If it's really good, you could soon be earning BIG money !

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LINUS

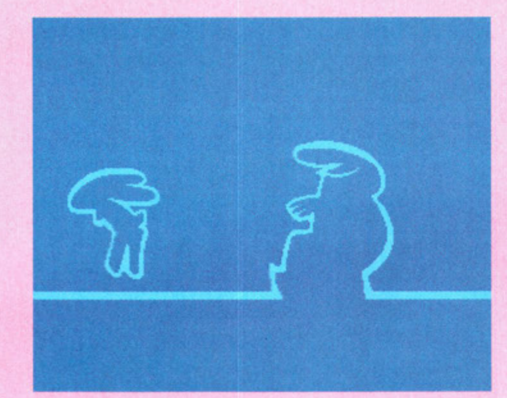
ANIM

17 BIT, DISK 2086

This really is a strange one. The title character is not the one from Peanuts, as you may have thought, but an oddly cute character with an enormous nose and a penchant for swimming. The odd thing is that Linus is drawn using only one thin blue line - as are the other characters and objects in his everyday life. Fans of weird Channel 4-style cartoons will probably know what I mean.

The story begins with Linus diving into the sea, again made from a line, and this is where the fun starts. He discovers the hard way that the sea isn't as deep as he'd thought, and so complains in no mean terms to the unseen artist who is just off the right-hand-side of the screen. The artist redraws the scene with the water removed, and then as if by magic up pops a little bunny rabbit instead. Everybody say "Ahhh!" (*pass the sick bag - Ed.*).

Try as I might to think of anything bad about *Linus*, I can't. Although the story is quite short it is incredibly entertaining, and has an excellent ending that leaves you wanting more. The sound is equally excellent - Linus' sampled rantings and ravings suit the action down to the ground, as does the bizarre but effective music.



Can you see what it is yet? OK, it's simple, but it's one of the most effective animations yet to appear in an Amiga demo - or any demo for that matter.

Bjarke Viksoe (the Dane who is responsible for the demo) has come up with a cutesy animation that almost rivals any Eric Schwartz production, (and that's saying something), and I just hope that he continues in the same vein.



"Well if you're going to draw me an ocean to swim in, you could at least have the decency to draw me some shorts as well! Who is Eric Schwartz, anyway?"

I really can't do justice to it, except to say that it really is superb, and more than makes up for the lack of an Eric Schwartz demo this month. Get it!

they do tend to flicker a bit especially if you're using a low-quality monitor or television.

This doesn't really spoil the overall effect, however – anyway, if you use hi-res mode a lot why not get a flicker fixer?

Being a big fan of comics, I really enjoyed this demo, and it would be a good addition to anyone's collection. Incidentally, if there are any good music programmers out there who can't draw, get hold of this and contact the artist – with the addition of a bit of atmospheric music, this could be *really* good.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL GUIDE



DAVID SLATER, £3.50, THREE DISKS

NOW LETS LOOK AT THE ZEBRAS.
THE ZEBRAS ARE A NICKNAME FOR THE REFEREE. THERE ARE 12 IN A
THEY ARE THE REFEREE, UMPIRE, LINESMAN, LINE JUDGE, SIDE JUDG
FIELD JUDGE BACK JUDGE. THEY ALL PATROL DIFFERENT PARTS O
THE FIELD AT DIFFERENT TIMES. IF THEY SEE A FOUL THEY
SIGNAL BY THROWNING A YELLOW HANKERCHIEF TO THE GROUN

THE REFEREE IS TOP DOG, AND ALL DECISIONS ARE MADE BY HI
ITS ALSO HIS JOB TO RELAY HIS DECISIONS TO THE CROWD
THROUGH A MIKE ATTACHED TO HIM, LIKE THIS.

EACH OF THE 14 GAMES EVERY WEEKEND, THERE IS AN EIGTH
OFFICAL. HE SITS IN THE REPLAY BOOTH. EVERY GAME IS TELEVIS
AND HE HAS COMPLETE CONTROL, SO HE CAN RECORD UNCLEAR
DECISIONS.

Multimedia, that's what it's all about. This screen is a good example, but don't check the spelling!

How many of you have ever sat watching the Superbowl with your mates, cheering away, and secretly wondering just what the heck it's all about? Come on, own up. Well, here is just the thing you need. Written using the *CanDo* multimedia creation package (which was supplied on *Amiga Format* Coverdisk 36) this demo will teach you the basics of American football.

Multimedia, if you don't already know, is a method of presentation which can make use of all features of the Amiga, such as text, graphics and sampled sound. It's extremely suited to creating informative programs which are similar in style to encyclopaedias, and this guide is a good example.

After loading the demo and selecting to 'Enter the Guide', you are presented with an options menu. Here, using the mouse, you can select between four separate areas of the guide, including rules and team formations. Depending on the option selected, another screen will then be loaded from disk and displayed.

Generally the screen layouts are pretty good, with monochrome graphics digitised from actual football games. The accompanying text, however, could be better. Although it is informative, the spelling is pretty bad and is therefore a little difficult to read. This is a minor point and should not put people off the program.

The author certainly seems to know his American football - the demo is pretty informative and it certainly taught me a lot. He may not pass his GCSEs, but he could probably make a mint as a programmer if he continues on from this first effort.

CRY FOR DAWN SLIDE SHOW



17 BIT, DISK 2030



Culled from the pages of US cult comic, *Cry for Dawn*, this demo offers oh-so-tacky fantasy thrills.

Slide show demos generally take one of two forms - art drawn using a paint package such as *DPaint IV*, and scanned art which has been digitised from a separate source such as television or magazines.

The *Cry For Dawn* demo is an example of the latter type, being scanned from the American horror magazine *Cry For Dawn* (curiously enough).

The pictures are of a reasonable quality, some featuring monstrous beings and some young scantily clad women striking the kind of comic-book fantasy-style poses that were clichés back in the late 1970s. Alongside a few of the pictures there are some 'heavily philosophical' quotes from the great magazine itself describing terror, horror, fear and the like. If this lot wasn't enough, the whole presentation is given a spooky feel by the atmospheric soundtrack.

OK, so it's not technically amazing, and certainly not one for the younger Amiga users (or those who feel that comics have advanced ever-so slightly as a genre since 1973). However, it is well thought out - and worth a look if you're a fanatic for comic-books with the kind of fantasy artwork that appears on Hondas.

TOP TEN DEMOS OF THE MONTH

Just so that you know what's in and what's not we ask a Public Domain library to tell us the numerical order of the flavours of the month...

17 BIT (AGAIN)

1.	Intense Rave Music Disk	2004
2.	SOS Melon Design	2088
3.	Silence Expose	2066A&B
4.	Terminator 3	1952
5.	Eric Schwartz' Unsporting	1955
6.	Matrix Ozone Techno	2012
7.	A-Z Of 64 Tunes	2024A-D
8.	Techno Tower	2034
9.	Shamen LSI	2062
10.	Sesame Street Remix	2089

WHERE TO GET THE DISKS IN THIS ISSUE

17 BIT: 2-8 Market Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 1DH 0924 366982

NBS: 1 Chain Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight PO33 2QQ

David Slater: 28 Bishops Road, Woolston, Southampton. (Home address).

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The AMIGA FORMAT Collection

Superb, complete, full-price programs for practically nothing isn't the whole story of the **Amiga Format** Collection. You also have the chance to upgrade to new versions of the Collection programs at special prices. Here are the offers...

Graphics Workshop

On our Christmas Special Issue we gave you, for virtually nothing, the powerful paint and animation program, *The Graphics Workshop*. What makes this drawing program so special, though, is along with all the normal tools that you would expect from a top paint program are some powerful additional utilities.

You're not just limited to using just one custom brush, instead you can pick up and store up to 10 brushes and use them at any time. It also features not only ANIM and Animbrush forms of animation, but also a Cell system which is probably the most powerful animation system there is for the Amiga. Why not get the most out of this top program by buying this expertly illustrated instruction book and tutorial guide (which includes a special tutorial disk as well) that has been specially rewritten by ***Amiga Format*** writer Maff Evans.

COVERDISK 30

Description	Price	Order Code
Graphics Workshop	**£16.40**	**GPHWK**



Sequencer One Plus Upgrade Kit

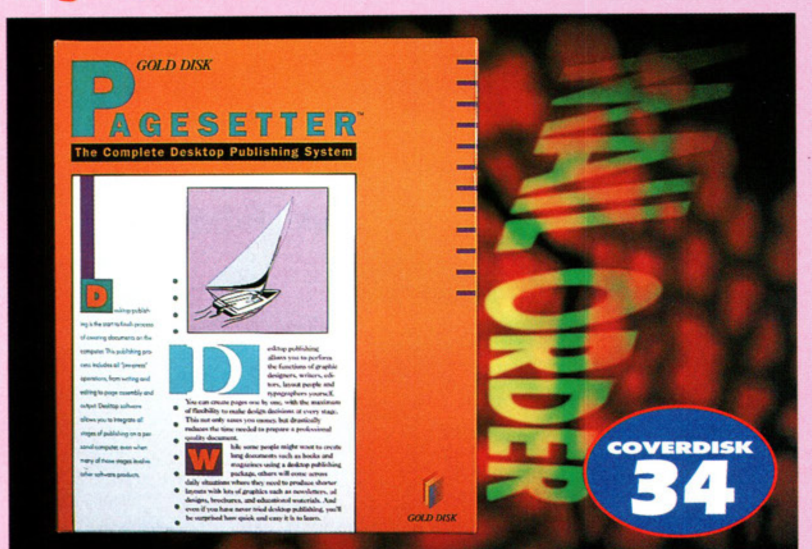
Also on the Special Christmas Issue was the powerful *Sequencer One* music package, RRP £89. (If you missed out on this amazing offer – which included *Graphics Workshop* as well – you can still get copies through Back Issues on Page 200.)

Through ***Amiga Format*** Mail Order you can upgrade to *Sequencer One Plus*. By doing so you can take advantage of a whole host of extra features that are not available on version one. These include the unique Juke Box screen and Gajits' new 'Diamond Drag' note-editing system. Also included in this latest update is tempo maps, auto count in, MIDI sys ex handling, track solo, extra quantis options and much more!

All of this should really sell for a massive RRP of £129.95. For a short time though, *Sequencer One Plus* is available as an upgrade kit for *Sequencer One* owners (and that of course includes everyone who has the program from the ***Amiga Format*** Coverdisk 30) for £49.95 (RRP). But we're offering it to you at a mere £39.95, which works out at an amazing total saving of £90.

Description	Price	Order Code
Sequencer One Plus	**£39.95**	**AM235**

PageSetter 2



If you want to produce a news letter for your local rugby club, or start up a footie fanzine then all you need is some DTP software. And there's no better program to start off with than *PageSetter*. We gave away version 1.2 of this very first Amiga DTP program on the Coverdisk of Issue 34, however if you want the current version here it is.

Gold Disk's update of the beginner's layout program takes a different approach from the original. It has been completely rewritten in machine code for extra speed. Also, rather than having separate text-editing and picture-editing modules, it now lets you edit text on the page. It also uses Compugraphic scalable fonts throughout, so extra quality on printout is guaranteed. All in all, this is the next best thing to professional-quality DTP on the Amiga. A full and detailed manual is included.

Description	Price	Order Code
PageSetter 2	**£50**	**PAGE UP**



Spectracolor

Oxxi-Aegis actually produced *Spectracolor* before they made the *Junior* version featured on the Coverdisk of *Amiga Format* 35. It was the first HAM paint program to use full brush animation, in the style of *Deluxe Paint*. Its powerful features make it a must for anyone who wants to do real animation in 4,096 colours, and it also has a number of unique innovations:

Brush Wraps
Advanced PAINT Modes
Air Brush
Brush Animation – including curved path animation with fades and simple morphing.

But this upgrade, specially arranged through *Amiga Format* Mail Order, doesn't stop there. You'll also receive a program disk, plus a sample tutorial disk and an in-depth 300-page manual that will take you through countless examples and techniques showing you precisely why *Spectracolor* is such an excellent paint-and-animation package.

Description	Price	Order Code
Spectracolor	**£29.99**	**SPECT UP**

CanDo – latest version

If you want to start learning about programming a computer then you can't go far wrong with Innovatronics' 'applications generator' *CanDo*. With this package you'll be able to create a variety of applications, from accounts packages to complete multimedia information systems that encapsulate all the elements that have made this subject the talking point that it has become in recent years.

Other programs can also draw upon *CanDo*'s ability to use sampled sounds, IFF images and even animations, and if you have Workbench 2 you can even use *CanDo* to control other applications on even hardware devices using ARexx scripts.

Innovatronics have been listening to requests from the people who used the original version of this powerful multimedia package, and the latest version 1.6 of the full professional *CanDo* program has a number of updates in accordance with their requests. Among these is full support for the gameport device, which means you can even write games with it! The program comes with a full and detailed manual, which could make all the difference for aspiring *CanDo* programmers.

Description	Price	Order Code
CANDO	**£89.95**	**CANUP**



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Description	Price	Order Code
Mini Office	**£59.99**	**AFMinOff**

Two Great Games

A fantastic package with Imageworks' *First Samurai* arcade adventure doubling up with another *Format Gold*-winning game: *Mega-lo-Mania*, the Godlike strategy game from Sensible Software.

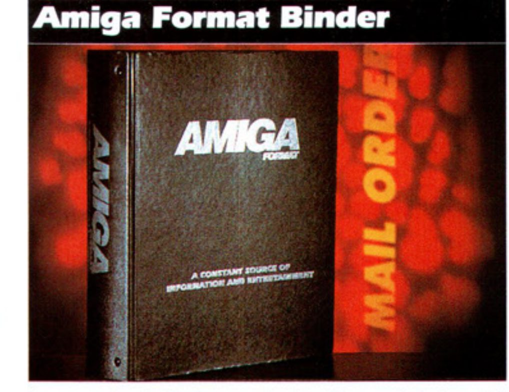
Description	Price	Order Code
Two for one	**£24.99**	**AFMegSam**

Home Accounts 2

Described by ***Amiga Format*** as 'a package which will suit any household', this is the ideal way to keep track of your financial affairs, from what's in your cheque account to how much is left after the bills!

Description	Price	Order Code
Home Accounts 2	**£44.99**	**AF229**

Amiga Format Binder



Are you tired of all your ***Amiga Format*s** being left scattered all over the floor? If so, protect them with these stylish and practical black-and-silver binders.

Description	Price	Order Code
One binder	**£4.95**	**AF108**
Two binders	**£9.00**	**AF109**

StereoMaster



This update of Microdeal's *MasterSound* is an ideal entry-level sound sampler. Its numerous features, and improved easy-to-use graphic interface make it an excellent bargain for budding music freaks.

Description	Price	Order Code
StereoMaster	**£29.99**	**AF234**

Amiga Format Mail Order

New Technosound Turbo



Newly updated sampler from New Dimensions enables you to grab digitised sounds, then sequence them into simple compositions. It contains a new cartridge, updated manual *and a* set of audio leads.

Description	Price	Order Code
Technosound Turbo	**£29.95**	**AF246**

Award Winners Compilation

What a combination! *Format Gold* ground-breaker *Populous*, stunning footie fun in *Kick Off*, the cartoon-on-a-disk *Space Ace* and the top-class puzzle game *PipeMania* all rolled into one great package!

Description	Price	Order Code
Award Winners Comp	**£20.99**	**AF245**

10 Great Games Comp

Xenon 2, *Pro Tennis Tour*, *Ferrari Formula One*, *Nighthunter*, *Rick Dangerous*, *Super Ski*, *Pick 'n' Pile*, *Carrier Command*, *Chicago* and *Satan* all in one massive pack! (Doesn't work on A500 Plus or A600).

Description	Price	Order Code
10 Great Games	**£24.99**	**AFGGComp**

Easy AMOS

SAVE £14

Specially designed for the beginner who wants to learn about programming but doesn't know eher to start, *Easy AMOS* is far more than just a programming language. Based on the highly successful *AMOS*, it has many helpful examples and detailed explanations to help you learn.

Description	Price	Order Code
Easy AMOS	**£29.99**	**AF247**

AMOS, Compiler & AMOS 3D

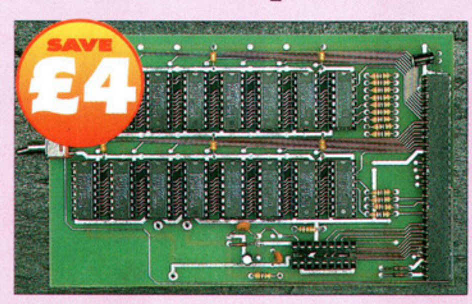
SAVE £25

Stop moaning about the games that are too easy or too difficult: get out there and write your own with this amazing offer package! Start with *AMOS*, the amazing Basic-like language designed to help you get great results with ease. Add *AMOS 3D* so that you can create your own 3D games and simulations as well! Then, when you want to run them from a disk, with the *AMOS Compiler* all your *AMOS* creations wil run faster and use less disk space.

Description	Price	Order Code
Amos Bundle	**£89.95**	**AFAmBun**

The Amiga Format star buys

512K Expansion





Admittedly this 512K memory expansion from WTS in the UK isn't the most glamorous looking piece of hardware that you're ever likely to see for your Amiga. But looks are not everything, because it gets the job done, and it also means we can bring all you 512K users out there the memory expansion that you need, but for the lowest possible price!

It comes with a battery-backed-up clock, so you need never set the time again. More and more software is being produced now that will only work properly if you have a one megabyte machine: and if you don't have an expansion, then you're also missing out on the complete full-price programs that are part of the **Amiga Format** Collection, like *Vista*, brought to you on Coverdisk 33, *PageSetter* (Coverdisk 34), *Spectracolor* (35), *CanDo* (36) or last month's excellent *IntroCAD*. So now you can expand your mind and your Amiga. Get upgraded!

Description	Price	Order Code
512K RAM Expansion	£25.99	AM237

Fun School 4

AMIGA FORMAT STAR BUY

SAVE £7

Are you sick of your kids just blasting away at swarms of mutant aliens? Do you want them to be eager to learn something useful from their Amiga, other than what the level codes are for the latest game to hit the top of the Penguin charts?

Well fret no longer, because the latest versions of the top-selling home educational programs are now available through **Amiga Format** Mail Order! The *Fun School* series from Europress Software aims to teach some of the basic educational skills to children, but to do it via enjoyable games. The new series comes in three different flavours, and it is aimed at three different age groups: Teddy looks after the under fives, Freddie the Frog caters for the five-to-seven year olds, while Sammy the Spy is there for eight-to-elevens. Each age level has six different games, which teach and test various facts and concepts.

Description	Price	Order Code
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Frog Disk	£17.99	AM232
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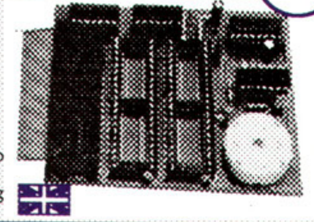
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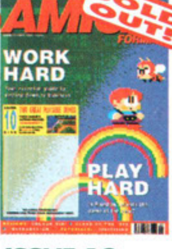

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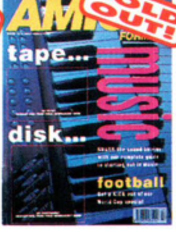

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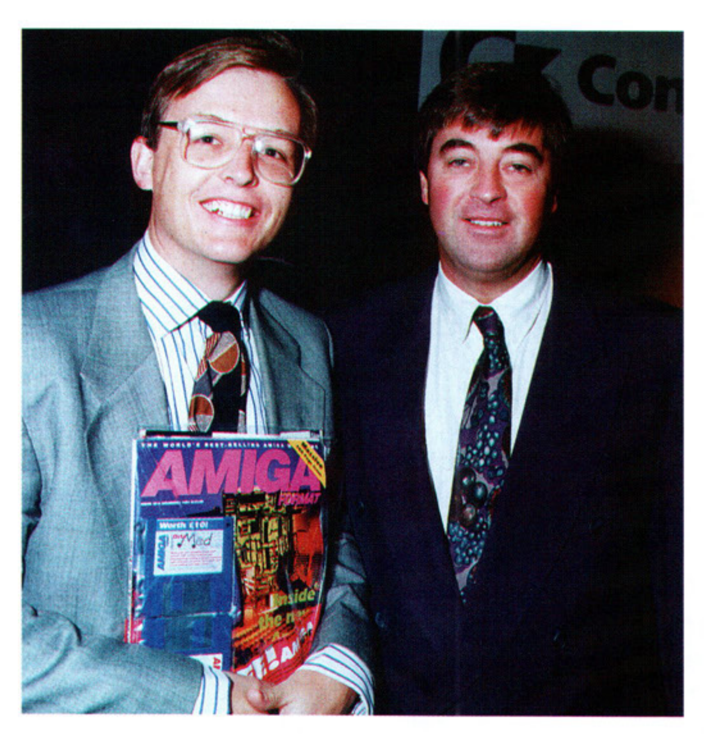

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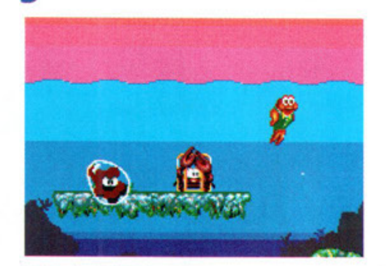
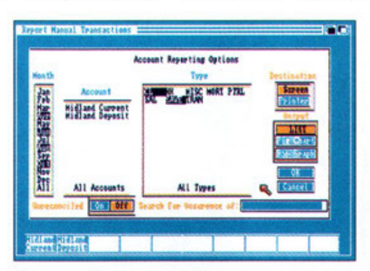


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Workbench

How? Why? What? If you want answers to your questions then the man to ask is **Pat McDonald**.

ANIM BOOTING

FROM: AR GARRARD, LEIGH-ON-SEA

I noticed at the foot of the page of the *Animation Station* information, you promised to go into detail, in *Amiga Format* Issue 38, on how to create a self-booting animation disk. You didn't, so how do I do it? I don't want to have to load a viewing program to see the cartoons.

No, unfortunately there wasn't room in that issue, and there isn't really in this one either. I am unsure of your last statement – you have to use an animation-view program to see animations, although it doesn't have to be a big one. If you want to see how to do it, I advise you to look at this month's *Down at the Arcade* disk with Workbench and Shell to see how.

On this month's disk, you will find an animation from *Real Things* people, which uses PPanim to display. PPanim is actually part of *PowerPacker Professional*, and I advise you to use that package, because you will be able to crunch your animations to a smaller size, fitting more frames on to a disk. You can get PPP from Database Direct who can be contacted on 051 357 2858.

GAMES TO GO

FROM: ROBERT HART, ROEHAMPTON

I have a B2000. When the next model is released I will naturally think about buying the new machine. However, although I use my Amiga for mainly business software I do enjoy playing the occasional game. As the new machines are likely to have 68020 processors rather than the more normal 68000 processors, will games still work? Or is the Amiga scene about to split in two?

It depends on the games programmers. A lot of commercial stuff released now has been tested for compatibility with accelerators and works fine - I don't just mean simulations, but arcade games too. Most of



Most new releases work fine on an A3000, because the machine has become an established standard.

the releases work fine on the A3000, so you don't have to give up games totally when you move to a more powerful machine.

COMPATIBILITY TIP

FROM: GUNER HUSEYIN, SOUTHGATE

Here's a tip for getting more programs to run with Workbench 2. Often, the actual program works fine, but programs and loaders run before the main program cause the machine to fail.

First of all load up Workbench. Then put in the disk which your incompatible program is on. Double click on the disk icon – you should now see the contents of the disk, although you might need to use the 'Show/All files' from the windows menu. Then try double clicking on different files. Unless you are very lucky, you probably won't get the right file straightaway. And don't be too surprised if your machine crashes and you have to use Workbench again.

Nice one Guner. For instance, on *Silent Service II* if you click on the icon 'Game' then it works fine.

ON THE BLINK

FROM: STEVE CRIDDLE, CHERITON

I have upgraded my A500 to 1Mb of chip RAM. However, my RAD doesn't want to work anymore. It seems that Kickstart 1.3 only scans the first half megabyte of memory for resident programs, so if I want a RAD do I have to reverse the upgrade?

What about 1.3 A2000s and A1500s? They have Kickstart 1.3 and 1Mb of chip RAM, but they still work fine. The first line of every startup-sequence you use reads (or should read);

```
Setpatch >NIL:
```

If you change it to this instead:

```
Setpatch >NIL: r
```

Your RAD should work fine now!

Continued overleaf

ANIMATION EXTRA

FROM: RYAN CARTWRIGHT, CHIGWELL

I have a query about *Animation Station* from Coverdisk 37. If I put a sound on a background audio channel, it plays continually, great! Now can you tell me how to turn it off again?

To tell the truth, I'm not entirely sure about the correct method, but one way to do it would be to start playing a blank sample (a sound which contains no noise – just filled with zeroes) on the same sound channel. Anyone who knows the right answer, please write in and tell!

Is it possible when using the View utility to turn off the credits screen? I'd sooner not have displayed it if I put a disk into PD.

Oh come on! Credit where it's due! There are other anim viewers if you really don't want technobabble messages appearing – ShowAnim or PPanim.

Commodore have reduced the size of the Amiga into the A600. When are they going to reduce the size of the power pack?

I'm afraid I honestly don't have a clue. Maybe I'm not the only one.

FROM D H, STOKE-ON-TRENT

I have a problem with *Animation Station*. When I try to save an animation, the screen goes black and nothing happens. Maybe it has something to do with saving the Undo buffers, as stated in the Readme file. It says either save the Undo buffers to disk, or make sure the computer does not save its Undo buffers. How do you do this?

First, a word of warning. If you have copied *Animation Station* on to your hard disk, you need to assign the drawer where it is stored as 'AStation'. If you don't, very strange things start happening as you use the program. To do this assign, type this into a Shell, or include it in your hard disk's startup-sequence just before the Loadwb command:

```
Assign Astation: DH0:Drawer
```

Where DH0 is the name of your hard disk, and drawer is the directory to which you have copied *Animation Station*. Right, to set the program correctly, you have to use the EditConfig script which came with it. Just double click on the icon, and the *Animation Station* Preferences will appear.

The reason why you have to change where the program saves its Undo Buffers to, is that if it saves them to the RAM disk as standard, that takes memory away from the system – which can crash the



Set the Undo = to either 'NIL:' or 'DF0:'. The first option simply discards the Undo buffers, while the second will save them to the first internal floppy disk.

machine if you only have 1Mb and a large animation. Further details on conserving memory can be found by clicking on the Readme.doc file that is on the *Animation Station* disk.

Furthermore I wish to point out the vast difference in review scores between your magazine and others. While other mags rave over some games, you give them a lukewarm or downright hostile reception. Why?

It's called integrity. Similar to style, either you've got it or you haven't.

TRAD MUSAK

FROM: TIM CLARKE, BRACKNELL

I own a 1Mb A500 and I use it most of the time for music programs for composing. I have used both *OctaMed* and *Sequencer One*, but I would like to be able to write proper sheet music, using my computer and keyboard, which is displayed in conventional notes and staves.

There is an excellent program which we use at school called *Notate*. I know this isn't available for the Amiga (it's an Archimedes program) but is there something similar?

There are an awful lot of music programs for the Amiga, but one of the best (and cheapest) is *OctaMed Pro*. This is very similar to *OctaMed*, but includes the notes and staves you want. There are better, more expensive programs (I've never seen *Notate* so I don't know whether it's better than anything on the Amiga) but *OctaMed Pro* should do most jobs. Contact Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton, S01 6QX.

OctaMED Pro has all the features of previous versions, but lets you view its tracks and channels using conventional musical notation.

MORE STORAGE

FROM: STEPHEN HARDING, BROMLEY

I own an A590 hard drive, with 2Mb of RAM. Although it serves me well I have reached the stage where 20Mb of disk space just isn't enough. I have been told that, rather than buying a whole new hard drive and putting my A590 in the bin, I can get a unit that will attach to the SCSI interface on the A590 and give more hard disk space. Is this so?

Yes it is so. The problem is that few dealers actually stock such units, and generally only certain types. Few are advertised in ***Amiga Format***, and only expensive large capacity ones at that. Both Power Computing (0234 843388) and Silica Systems (081-309 1111) stock such units.

Where can I get it and how much?

OK, I admit it, Evesham Micros do external SCSI hard drives. They come boxed and with a built-in power supply. A 40 Mb model will set you back £249, while 100 Mb of extra storage costs £399. A SCSI cable is included too.

SSL ONSLAUGHT

FROM: KEVIN MAYNE, LISKEARD

After reading your article about Super Amigas in *Amiga Format* Issue 38, I have several questions about accelerators. I own a 1.3 A500 with an A590 and 3Mb of RAM in total.

1) Do both the A5000 and B5000 built by Solid State Leisure come with 1Mb of 32-bit memory and a maths coprocessor?

Yes.

2) What difference does additional memory on accelerator cards make? Does more memory increase the speed?

More memory on accelerator cards permits larger programs and more data to gain the speed increases of an accelerator. A minimum of 1Mb is necessary (same as for a standard Amiga) although 2Mb lets you ROM shadow – that is, copy the Kickstart ROM into high speed RAM, giving even more speed.

3) How much faster would my A500 be with either of these accelerators?

With an A5000, about 4-5 times. With a B5000, about 7-8 times faster.

4) What exactly will be speeded up? WIll the speed of the windows on Workbench open and close quicker, or is that dependent on the speed of the hard drive?

Everything that the processor does is speeded up. So yes, windows do display faster, programs and scripts work faster and so on. Most hard drives will send information quicker than AmigaDOS can list them. Floppy drives are slightly speeded up, although the difference is very minor.

What isn't speeded up is the speed at which the custom hardware works. So although you don't get blinding blitter speed, you also don't get sound samples playing too fast either.

5) I've heard that games like *M1 Tank Platoon*, *F-19* and *UMS II* will be speeded up. Is this true?

Yes. *M1 Tank Platoon* is one of my all time favourite games, but to see it at its best you have to see it on an accelerator. On a really fast GVP board, the graphics move at realistic video speeds! Most sims benefit greatly from an accelerator board.

6) Are SSL accelerators the best/fastest for that I can get for under £500?

In my opinion, yes. They're a bit bodged, and the documentation is on a disk rather than printed to cut costs, but they do work very well indeed – which is surely the most important thing.

7) Are accelerators easy to install?

Fitting them does invalidate your warranty, but if you can use a screwdriver and are not afraid of lifting chips out of your machine, then yes, they are easy to install.

8) Finally, would I have to purchase the A5000 or B5000 direct from SSL, as I've never seen these accelerators advertised in your magazine?

SSL are in the process of setting up a deal with a distributor, so that you don't have to buy direct from the manufacturer. I regret I can give no more details. SSL 0933 650677.

MINOR CORRECTIONS

FROM: P VILBOUREUX, EVESHAM MICROS

Just a couple of quick notes on recent reports of Evesham products:

1) The Megaboard does work very well, but if connected to a slow RAM expansion (where the chips are more than 20ns slower than the Amiga's internal memory) then it won't work with blitter intensive operations like *DPaint* or a lot of games.

Fair point. Shame you don't tell your customers.

2) Zydec and Phoenix were first with A601 clone A600 memory expansions. We've been selling them for over three months, nearly as long as the A600 has been around!

Is it really important?

3) Your articles on chip RAM expansion for the A500 miss out a couple of important facts. After performing the cuts to get 1Mb of chip RAM, if the trapdoor memory expansion doesn't go fast enough (20ns slower than the internal memory) then the custom hardware can't actually talk or listen to it fast enough, which causes the machine a problem and ends up crashing. The cure is to either replace the chips with faster models or (even better) buy a new trapdoor expansion.

How many times have I said this? Not enough, obviously. Make sure the RAM chips have a serial number ending in 10 (for 100 nano seconds) or less, to make sure that the trapdoor memory goes as fast as the memory on the mother board. Nearly all new expansions have these fitted as standard anyway.

CDTV QUICKFIRE

FROM: ELTON POWELL, BANFF

I am thinking about buying a CDTV, but to do this I will have to sell my present CD player, and put the money from that towards it. So I have come up with a few (obvious) questions.

1) Could I plug a CDTV into my hifi the same way I did with my A500 and use it just like a normal music CD player?

Sure, no problem.

2) Is it true that with an external floppy disk drive, that I can run all 1.3 software on CDTV? Including all 1Mb games?

Not quite. The majority, certainly. However, there are some differences, and so not all software works. One of the problems is that the CD drive is not easily disconnected and takes memory away from the Amiga, so some programs do not have enough memory to run.

3) Can I plug a CDTV into my monitor, or do I have to use a CDTV?

Yes. The CDTV has ports for monitors, floppy drives, printers and serial units (modems), all of which are common to both the CDTV and Amiga computers. However it doesn't have built in ports for mice or joysticks – you have to buy a separate expansion called a game brick to use these.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE

FROM: M E BRADWELL, GRIMSBY

Is there a way to turn a non-DOS disk into a DOS disk? The reason I ask is that my son enjoys video titling, and uses *Scala 500*. He wants to put PD pictures as backdrops to graphics, but often these are on non-DOS disks and can't be loaded as a result. So how do I get at them? Can PD pictures be legally used in this way?

There is no one way of turning a non-DOS disk into a DOS disk. However, what you could do is use a ripper program. Using them is a simple but tedious task – you reset the Amiga when a picture is being displayed, and then use the ripper program to look through the Amiga's memory to see if the picture survived reset. In a lot of cases it does.

A better solution is an Action Replay or similar freezer cartridge. These let you look at an Amiga's memory at the touch of a button, saving pictures out in standard IFF form. However, many PD programs and pictures are proof against ripper cartridges – some work, some don't.

As for the legality, it depends on the artist. Most PD artists hate their work being used for commercial purposes without permission, and if a picture displays the magic words 'Image Copyright' and a date, you cannot touch it at all. However, most will be pleased if you credit their work, saying who the artist is and from what PD disk you got the artwork from.

INTROCAD PRINTING

FROM: W B TARBUCK, MANCHESTER

I have been experimenting with the *IntroCAD* disk for the past few days, finding it very interesting to work with. However, I have come across a couple of problems with it:

1) When the disk is autobooted, none of the supplied drivers will operate my Star LC200. I just get the message 'Cannot Open Output Device'. However, when I boot Workbench or *MCAD* it will print using the JX80 driver. I notice that the *MCAD* driver is over 4,000 bytes long, while the *IntroCAD* one is only about 400.

The correct driver is indeed Epson JX80 for your printer. However, printers will not work with *IntroCAD* unless you boot from Workbench first. Then run *IntroCAD*. The problem is that a couple of files were missed off of *IntroCAD* for running printers – below is the method for putting them onto *IntroCAD* so that you can print as normal.

2) When I autoboot *IntroCAD*, although I can read the documents I cannot print them out. I can look at them with *PPMore*, but when I try to print them I get the error message 'Cannot Open Printer'. So I suspect a different problem, although if I boot Workbench first and then print, it works.

When programs make requests for hardware, like printers, and it isn't available then an error message is displayed by the program. Exactly what it says is up to the programmer – so you often get different messages.

To put the printer files from Workbench onto *IntroCAD*, you have to delete some of the example pictures first. Then boot Workbench, double click on the Shell and type these three lines:

Continued overleaf

Techno Babble

Do you know how to talk techie speak? Well if you don't then this little bit of jargon busting should sort you out!

32-bit memory: memory on an accelerator card. Accelerators without 32-bit memory suffer massive speed slow down.

Accelerator: hardware expansion that gives your Amiga a faster CPU. Often used with maths-intensive software where a standard processor is too slow, for programs called 'ray tracers' which literally trace the rays of light which bounce around a scene to produce a picture. Also used to considerably speed up flight and other kinds of simulations.

Anim Brush: a brush is a small section of a graphic screen, cut out with a paint program like *Deluxe Paint*. Anim brushes are different small images with the same dimensions – for instance, a bird flapping its wings or an eye blinking.

Blitter: Block Image Transfer device. Used for copying large areas of computer memory from A to B, or to combine different areas into one single image. Widely used to generate large graphic shapes in computer games.

Chip RAM: memory accessible by the custom chips (Paula, Agnus, Denise) as well as the processor. Used to store all graphics and sounds. Can be used by programs too – with speed slow downs.

CLI: Command Line Interface. The program which lets you type commands into AmigaDOS for standard operations like copying files or getting a directory. Shell is more commonly used now.

Copper: Co-processor. Used to generate subtly coloured backgrounds – this device built into the Agnus chip can alter colours while the screen is being generated. Executes instructions at the same time as the processor.

CPU: Central Processing Unit. The decision-making chip, the one that tells everything else what to do. It can be interrupted by custom hardware if its programs are in chip RAM.

Fast RAM: memory that's only accessible by the processor. Programs stored here run faster than those in chip RAM – hence the name.

Freezer cartridge: quasi legal device for examining programs while they are running. Usually with many useful built-in utilities which help overshadow the devices' dubious origins.

Hard drive: basically a big disk for keeping Workbench and all the serious software that you use. Works much faster than a floppy disk. More and more games are becoming installable on to a hard drive.

IFF: Interchange File Format. A standard way of storing pictures and sounds, invented by Electronic Arts and adopted by Commodore. A single standard – practically all art programs can load and save pictures in this form.

Kickstart: the name of the set of programs which are run when the Amiga is turned on. Also contains many library functions for use by programmers. Latest release is Kickstart 2.04. Other releases; 1.3, 1.2, 1.1. Usually contained in a ROM chip, although early Amiga Kickstarts had to be loaded from disk.

PD: Public Domain. Literally, software that is the property of everybody. PD disks can be freely copied by anyone and you can also distribute them to whoever you want. The correct term is 'Freeware'. 'Shareware' (try before you buy) and 'Licenseware' (commercial and non-distributable) also come under the same rough heading.

Prefs: the suite of programs for setting up and customising Workbench. If Workbench was built into the Amiga on a ROM chip, then Prefs (or Preferences) would be a waste of time, as you would not be able to alter any of the Amiga's Workbench settings.

RAD: the Recoverable RAM Drive. Appears to Workbench as an ordinary disk drive, although really it's part of your Amiga's RAM. Workbench can be stored here. If you reset, the contents of RAD are remembered. So you can boot Workbench in seconds, if you can spare enough memory for RAD.

ROM: Read Only Memory. Memory that cannot be altered. Widely used as the starting programs for computer systems that have just been turned on – they remember things permanently.

RAM: Random Access Memory. Memory that can be altered and realtered many times. Typically, it does not remember what it contains when the computer's power is switched off.

Script file: a set of commands which you would otherwise have to type into the CLI or Shell by hand. Saved as a text file. Learning how to use Shell or the CLI involves learning how to write script files.

SCSI: Small Computer Systems Interface. A way of wiring a connector. SCSI hard drives, scanners and plotters are available, and can be daisy chained in a similar manner to floppy disk drives.

Sequencer: a computer program for composing music. Usually has the ability to control MIDI instruments through a MIDI interface, although most allow you to control the Amiga's internal sound too.

Shell: more up-to-date version of CLI. Works in exactly the same way, but allows some flexibility in what commands are called via the 'alias' function. Also gives some hot key combinations to allow some editing of previously entered commands.

Sound Sampler: hardware device that converts electrical music signals (typically from a tape or CD player) into computer sound. Can also be used with a microphone to capture live sounds.

Sprite: a graphic object that is independent of the screen. On the Amiga, sprites are limited in size and colours. Typically used for mouse pointers, alien missiles, and so on. Sprites are handled by the Denise chip, and are limited to four colours (if you have eight sprites) or 15 colours (if you have four sprites).

Workbench: the set of programs which sets up a graphical 'point-and-click' interface on the Amiga. Much more friendly than the CLI or Shell, but not as flexible. Always has to be loaded from disk, which is slow but does allow much customisation. Workbench 2 requires a Kickstart 2 ROM. Workbench 1.3 requires a 1.3 ROM, 1.2 needs a 1.2 ROM and so on.

```
Copy from Sys:devs/parallel.device to IntroCAD:devs
Copy from sys:devs/printer.device to IntroCAD:devs
Copy from Sys:devs/serial.device to IntroCAD:devs
Copy from Sys:l/port-handler to IntroCAD:l
```

3) Finally, would it be possible to incorporate some sort of eraser as in *Deluxe Paint* to trim the ends off of lines that are too long?

Not easily. A simpler way is to use the Point function from the Edit menu, and move the points of lines until they fit properly.

SMARTER ICONS

FROM:A G SMITH, DONCASTER

I would like to change the RAM: disk icon into something that looks better. Although I can change disk icons fine, I can't seem to do this! How do I go about it? I use *IconEd* and *IconMeister*.

To change the RAM disk icon on Workbench, a disk icon (made with the above programs or my shareware favourite, *Icon Master*) must be copied into the RAM: disk before Workbench is loaded. So you store the disk icon somewhere else on your disk, and include something like this in your startup-sequence:

```
Copy from Ramdiskfile to RAM:disk.info
```

This must be put before the LoadWb (Load Workbench) command in your startup-sequence.

FOREIGN ACQUISITION

FROM: IAIN SMITH, PETERLEE

I own an A500 (revision 5, Kickstart 1.3) and will be going on holiday to the States and wish to bring some software and hardware back with me. Is this advisable and will there be any incompat ibility problems?

In some ways this is a good idea, because Amiga goodies designed and built in the US cost less there than they do here. Hardware which plugs straight into the Amiga with no additional power supplies are the best items to look out for (floppy drives, sound samplers, analogue joysticks and so on). However, there are a couple of things to bear in mind:

1) Hardware which comes with a separate power supply will not work in this country. If you got a UK power supply for it, then it would work.

2) Software will be in NTSC mode, which means that you will get a blank area at the bottom of your screen when you run it. Also, American software looks slow on UK PAL systems. If you use the Mode Switch program on this month's Coverdisk, then you can see the software as it looks in the States.

3) Hardware which uses or alters the video signal (Video Toaster, Genlocks, 24-bit graphics cards) will not work on a UK television system.

PHOENIX AMIGA

FROM: PETER BARLOW, CHRISTCHURCH

Following the demise of my PC (I recent strategically spilt coffee on the power supply) I am contemplating breaking it up and using the bits with my A500. I'm told that the SCSI hard drive will work plus the chip RAM. Do you know of a housing/SCSI controller that will allow the hard drive to operate? Preferably one that can take SIMMs too?

Either the GVP or Protar will do well, although you may have trouble getting a unit without the bits in already. Silica shop (081-309 1111) or Protar (0923 254133) should be able to sort you out. Be polite and persistent – although bare expansion units are rarely supplied as standard, they are possible to obtain.

ACCELERATION ANSWERS

FROM: JEFFEREY MCWILLIAMS, TOKYO

I'm writing in regard to Ronald Walker's letter in *Amiga Format* Issue 37 Page 201 about the VXL 30/25. I had the same problems with my VXL so I sent it back to the manufacturer (mine also refused to work sometimes, prompting me to contact Microbotics).

Anyway, it's been about two months since I sent it and I was wondering if I would get it back, so I gave the people a call. They do at least have a courteous and well-informed customer service. They told me that the VXL 30/25 is being modified because of compatibility problems and mine is on its way through the post.

So I recommend that you contact your point of purchase or the manufacturer to see if your board has been modified and if it hasn't, whether you can get it modified. If the warranty hasn't expired it should be free.

And there you have it, straight from the land of the rising sun!

CLICK SOUND

FROM: DE LEWIS, BURSCOUGH

I have a problem with writing music on the Amiga. I am presently using *OctaMed Pro* version 3. I get a clicking on the sound channels which is worst when a channel is playing a fast sequence of notes.

I thought it might be due to the fact that the sound samples are being cut before they have decayed. However, I have noticed that I also get a click when I exit from the package. So I thought it might be due to the sound chip switching off. Am I the only one who has this problem? What can I do?

Not a lot really. It could be that your Amiga has a problem with it's Paula (sound) chip, but I doubt it. When a sample ends playing, unless the last few bits of sample data are quiet or silent, you will get a click. If you play notes at a fast rate, they don't have time to decay and so you get a click.

The trick is to make real sure that the level the sample begins at is close or the same as what it ends at. This entails lots of messing about with sample editors (*OctaMed* has one built in, as do the later *Tracker* programs). You may find that turning on the filter (the power light shows whether the sound filter is active or not) reduces this, but it comes down to your samples in the end.

ORGANISED COMMS

FROM: J W PEACOCK, BFPO 114

I recently purchased an A500 which has been an asset and fun at work and at home. I also own a Sharp IQ-7200 electronic organiser and have been informed that it is possible to link the pair together. Could you advise me as to how I should go about this? Do I need any extra hardware?

It may be that you do, although most electronic organisers have a serial port (commonly called an RS232 or RS432 interface). If your Sharp has one of these, it is possible to link the two machines and transfer files from one to the other.

What you need is a null modem cable and some comms software for the Amiga. I would recommend the shareware *NComm* 2, widely available from many different PD libraries.

You will also need a serial lead to connect the two machines. Although the Amiga has a fairly standard RS232 connector (25 pin D type) electronic organisers rarely have standard connectors, so you will probably only get such a lead from the place you bought your Sharp organiser.

The real tricky bit is getting both the communication software on your Sharp and NComm 2 to talk to each other. Assuming they are both set to the same speed (baud rate), number of data bits and stop bits, then try entering messages on one keyboard and see if they are displayed on the other machine. Have fun!

HANDS UP

FROM: W K FISHER, REDCAR

I bought an A500 Plus at Christmas primarily as a games machine for my grandchildren, but I have since been intrigued into using it for other things. I have followed your tutorials with some success but not being that interested in pictures decided to create a compilation disk of suitable programs for my grandchildren.

I have successfully copied some programs, but have a real problem with *Paint Pot 2*. Whenever it is double clicked on a requester appears asking for Coverdisk39b. I am certain that I have copied all the right files across, so why does it do this? How do I overcome the problem?

It's down to the *Paint Pot 2* demo only working from a disk called Coverdisk39b. Congratulations, you're the only person who actually noticed this. There's little you can do to alter the program itself, but you can call your compilation disk Coverdisk39b or you can include an Assign command in the startup-sequence – for this to work, the Assign command must be in the C directory of your disk:

```
Assign Coverdisk39b: diskname
```

Also I have some idea of what a startblarb (sic) is but can you tell me how to put in on to a disk?

Right, a startup-sequence is just a list of shell commands that lives in the S directory and is called up automatically when you boot a disk. To write one from scratch, you need a text editor or word processor to edit text files like startup-sequences.

You can use the *GenAm2* text editor from *Devpac* on this month's Coverdisk, or *Memacs* on your extras disk. One tip: have a good look at other people's startup-sequences before you attempt to write your own.

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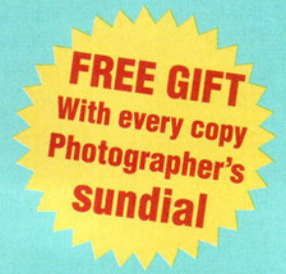
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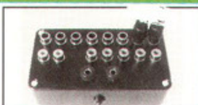
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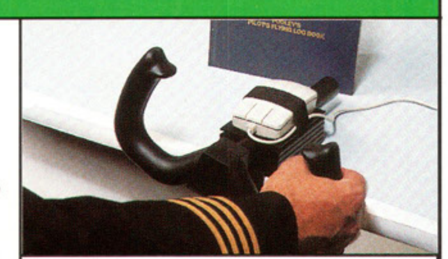
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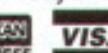
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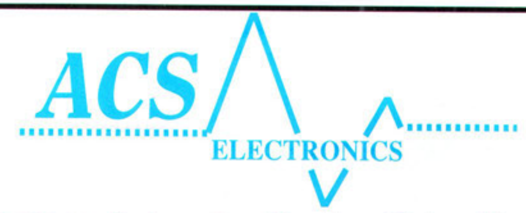
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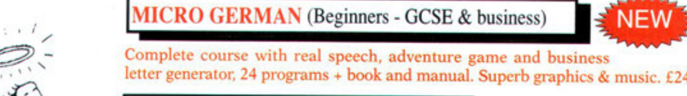
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Access



Answerfile

Where does the term 'Guru' come from? Why does my virus killer give me a virus? **Pat McDonald** answers these and more...

Q What's the best virus killer?

A *Virus Checker* by John Veldthuis is the best. Currently, up to version 6.06 (and probably updated again by the time you read this) it works on more machines and recognises more viruses than any other program. Best of all, if you run it from your startup-sequence, it will sit in the background while you work, informing you of any nasty disks that you accidentally insert. It's widely available from many different PD libraries.

Q Everytime that I use my virus killer, it informs me there is a virus in memory! How do I cure this?

A One pastime which many PD disk makers think is a real laugh is putting viruses on to virus killer disks. The really stupid ones put on viruses that the virus killer doesn't even recognise. Some people can be so juvenile. Get the above program, get it to check itself and forget your virus paranoia.

Q Can a sound sampler record (sample) sounds from any sound source, or just a MIDI keyboard?

A Any sound source at all – CD, tape, vinyl, hifi, or live through a microphone.



Sound samples are digital computer recordings of real life sounds – any sound at all can be sampled.

Q I too have problems with my mouse and joysticks like Patrick Dinant in *Amiga Format* Issue 38. How do I tell where the problem lies?

A You can get joystick tester programs through most PD libraries. One useful feature of the Amiga is that by holding down the Amiga key and pressing the cursor keys, the mouse pointer can be moved. By pressing the left Amiga and Alt keys while click the left mouse button, while right Amiga and right Alt click the right button enables you to do this. If you still get a droopy mouse pointer, then the problem is inside your machine and you should get it checked out by a repair company.

Q How do I use *Diskdoctor*?

A I'll assume that you only have one disk drive. First load Workbench, double click on the Shell and type:

```
Diskdoctor DF0:
```

That's DFZero, not DFO for Orangutan. The computer will ask you to insert a disk to correct, then press Return. The computer will then check the disk for errors and try to correct them. Be warned, it will often give up on a disk and mark most of it as empty, so never ever *Diskdoctor* original disks. That's why you make backups – if you can't backup a disk then *Diskdoctor* won't work anyway.

Q Where can I get version 2 of the BBC emulator? That is, the one that can read BBC-formatted disks?

A HB Marketing, 0753 686000.

Q My caps lock light keeps flashing and then my Amiga refuses to accept any keyboard input. Is there a fault with my Amiga?

A Yes, and very common one, especially with the later A500s and some of the A500 Pluses. If this happens, don't attempt a repair yourself. Nearly always the problem lies with the keyboard processor chip (which is really a separate computer built into the keyboard). As it is soldered in, replacing it is not for the inexperienced.

Q I cannot copy disks using the Shell, my machine tells me that it cannot read the source disk. What am I doing wrong?

A Nothing. If Workbench cannot read a disk, then it was not meant to be copied. That is, it's protected against piracy. There are many copying solutions, both hardware and software, which allow you to copy some of these disks – but no solution is 100 per cent effective.

Q Could you tell me where I can buy an Amiga-to-Scart cable from?

A Trilogic (0274 691115) a good range, though lots of companies do them. They even do leads for connecting CPC monitors to your Amiga. Not that they're particularly great monitors though.

Q Why do you need 'Personal RAM cards' for the CDTV, and why do they cost £79.95 for a measly 64K?

A They are useful for putting game save positions onto – CDTV *Sim City* will do this, as will a couple of other games. The reason they cost so much is that there isn't much demand for them, and also they are non-volatile: that is they remember their contents when you switch the machine off.

Q Since adding 2Mb of memory to my Amiga, a lot of PD software refuses to work. Why does this happen?

A Because a lot of PD programmers cannot afford memory expansions, and so they cannot test their programs on such systems. The same goes for hard drives, accelerators, PC emulators and other bits of hardware beyond the reach of the average coder.

Q Where can I get the disks for *Get The Most Out Of Your Amiga* from?

A From Future Publishing's Mail Order division based on 0458 74011, or turn to Page 180.

Q Could you tell me what a 'Guru meditation' or 'Software Failure' message is?

A A very annoying, but useful, feature of the Amiga. When a program attempts to do something that the computer cannot do (for instance, access a part of memory that doesn't exist) then the computer steps in and says 'the software (program) has failed'. It then displays two numbers inside a flashing red box before resetting.

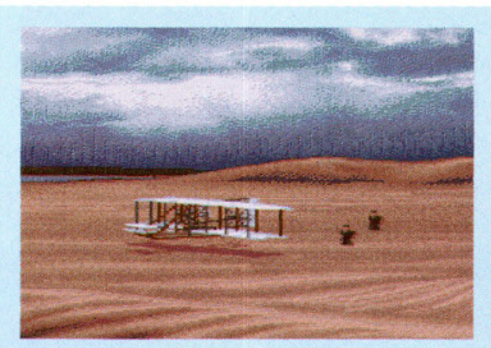
The first number is the nature of the error – more than one can occur at the same time. The second number is where in memory the error occurred. Now, although this is very annoying, you can't really blame the machine. It's all down to the programmers doing their job properly. It's very noticeable that some programs (for instance, *Deluxe Paint*) are very 'secure' and very rarely cause Gurus.

The reasons why this is a useful feature are twofold. First, you can write down the numbers and

Q How do I install *Wings* onto my hard drive? The install program doesn't seem to work properly.

A Loads of people still ask for this. Hold down the 'Ctrl' and 'D' key while you reboot your computer. It will stop in the CLI – just type LoadWb and hit Return, then Endcli and hit Return.

Now insert the *Wings* disk with the installation program on it. Double click and it should work! *Wings* is a lot more fun played from a hard disk. Incidentally, this method also works on other programs that do not install correctly, although it doesn't work on all of them by any means.



***Wings*, the best 'pure flying' game. Sure there are arcade sequences, but the dogfighting is excellent.**

tell the programmer about them, saying exactly when they occurred ('just when I click on the save button'). The programmer then has a fair idea of where the error is occurring in their program.

Second, if you have a terminal or computer plugged into the serial port when a software failure occurs, by sending a delete character (code 127) to the crashed Amiga, it will dump the processor registers and more information to the connected computer. So you can 'debug' a crashed Amiga straight away!

Workbench 2 no longer calls this a Guru meditation, just a software failure. The name comes from the very early days of the Amiga, when Amiga programmers – Gurus – used to meditate about why their programs crashed. Like, radical, maaan.

Q I often see the commands Add21K and Add44K in PD disk startup-sequences. These commands are not on Workbench, so what are they for?

A They are PD commands for freeing up more memory. They steal a bitplane from Workbench, and a couple of other bits of memory too, and hand them back to the system. They are handy when you need just a little bit more memory. I believe they were originally written by Mettallion of the Kefrens group – sorry if I've credited the wrong person but I think I've got the right one.

Q If I buy an extra disk drive, will all of my 1Mb games stop working because the disk drive takes memory away from the system?

A No, although some programs will not work due to the lack of memory. Happily most Amiga external drives are fitted with switches, so when you do come across the odd game that is very memory hungry you're OK.

Q I am a programmer and want to know how to get my programs 'discovered'.

A Do it in stages. The best way to start is to put something noteworthy into the Public Domain – not just another *Breakout* or *Tetris* game, but something original. Make it novel and ask for feedback from the people who get it – that way you get a balanced opinion of what you're doing right, and what you're doing wrong. You also make a few pen friends.

You don't need to put the full versions into the PD - just some of the more noteworthy levels, possibly offering to supply the full programs for a few pounds. By getting more people to use your programs, you get much more information – other people won't do things quite the same as you.

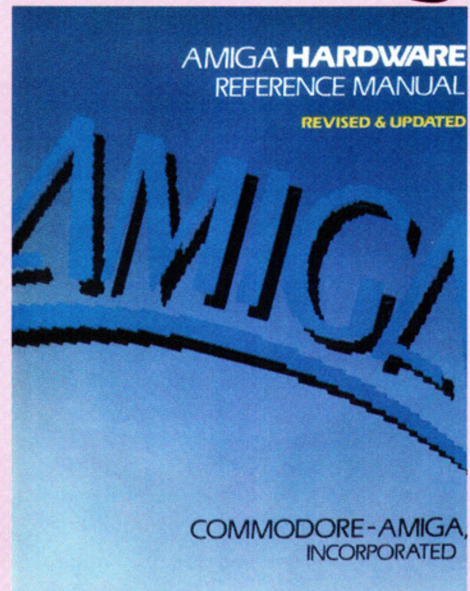
If you've got a real stunner of an idea, then do the best you can to make it into a program. Do as much as you can before approaching a software house with your work. Be very patient, as there are many people trying to break into professional programming. If you show the right idea to the right people at the right time, you can get signed up straight away.

Q My Amiga's picture isn't displayed properly – the edges are outside the display area of my TV. How do I get a full, decent picture?

A The best thing to do when your picture doesn't fit your TV or monitor is call a TV repairman. He'll be able to adjust the internal controls so that you don't get any missing edges.

In-depth explanation
No 7: Programming

If you have absolutely no idea what a computer program is, or how they are designed, read on for a bit of basic enlightenment.



The *Amiga Hardware Reference Manual* is a bible to machine code programmers. It gives exact information on how to get the custom chips opening screens, playing sounds, moving sprites and so on. It also gives information on what to avoid doing.

1 Any computer program is best thought of as a list of instructions. This list is separated into different lines; each line has at least one job to do. These can be grouped together to do more complex tasks, and a collection of lines is called a routine. If a routine is used by other routines – for instance, a routine for adding two numbers together – it's called a subroutine.

2 All computers have only one real language (machine code) specific to that machine. This code is a set of very simple commands that must be built into complex patterns to do anything useful. However, there are many other computer languages, which are good for writing different sorts of programming. LISP or PROLOG are good for artificial intelligence, COBOL is good for databases, BASIC is for beginners, and so on.

3 One way to categorise programs is to refer to their level. High-level languages are usually similar to English, and so are relatively easy to think in (you haven't mastered any language until you can think in it). High-level languages are often interpreted, meaning that when you type in a command, it can be interpreted at once.

4 Intermediate-level languages are more flexible, in that you can create new command words. However, their power and flexibility means that they are more complex to learn properly. C and Forth are examples of intermediate languages. They are compiled, which means that a program must be written entirely before it is translated into the machine language. They are fast though.

5 Low-level languages are human approximations of machine language. Assembly language is the general term that covers this. Assembly language must always be compiled into true code, but produces the fastest programs possible. Don't be confused – machine 'code' is the sets of numbers that really make computers tick, while assembly language is a mixture of text and numbers for human convenience.

6 The custom chips that make the Amiga special (Paula, Agnus, Denise) can be accessed at machine level, meaning that they respond only to certain sets of numbers. For instance, changing the display of an Amiga from normal to high resolution involves setting one bit at a particular place in memory. These custom chips, although powerful tools for a programmer, make Amiga assembly language even more challenging.

7 The level of a language determines just how long it will take to write a given program. High-level languages can be written very quickly, although they run the slowest and are not very efficient at using memory. Intermediate level languages usually run fast, although exactly how good they are depends on experience. Machine language is the fastest and most compact, but takes much longer to write.

8 Computers rely on perfection. If there is an error in a programs, then it will not run properly – such an error is called a bug. The process of removing errors and perfecting programs is known as debugging, and is the most time-consuming and difficult part of programming. Good programmers do not write perfect programs – they perfect programs after they are written.

9 Learning how to program is not difficult, but relies on many factors. One of the biggest problems is getting hold of old programs and seeing how they were written. That's why there will be plenty of example code for the Bullfrog's programming tutorial (Page 63). Collect all the source files you can, to learn the tricks of other programmers

10 Another big factor is time. The more time you spend programming, the better you get – practice makes perfect. It's all too easy to attempt something too big, get stuck become disillusioned and jack it all in. Even if you are just writing very small programs to explore, you are learning. Be persistent and patient, and one day your Amiga will do what you tell it to do.

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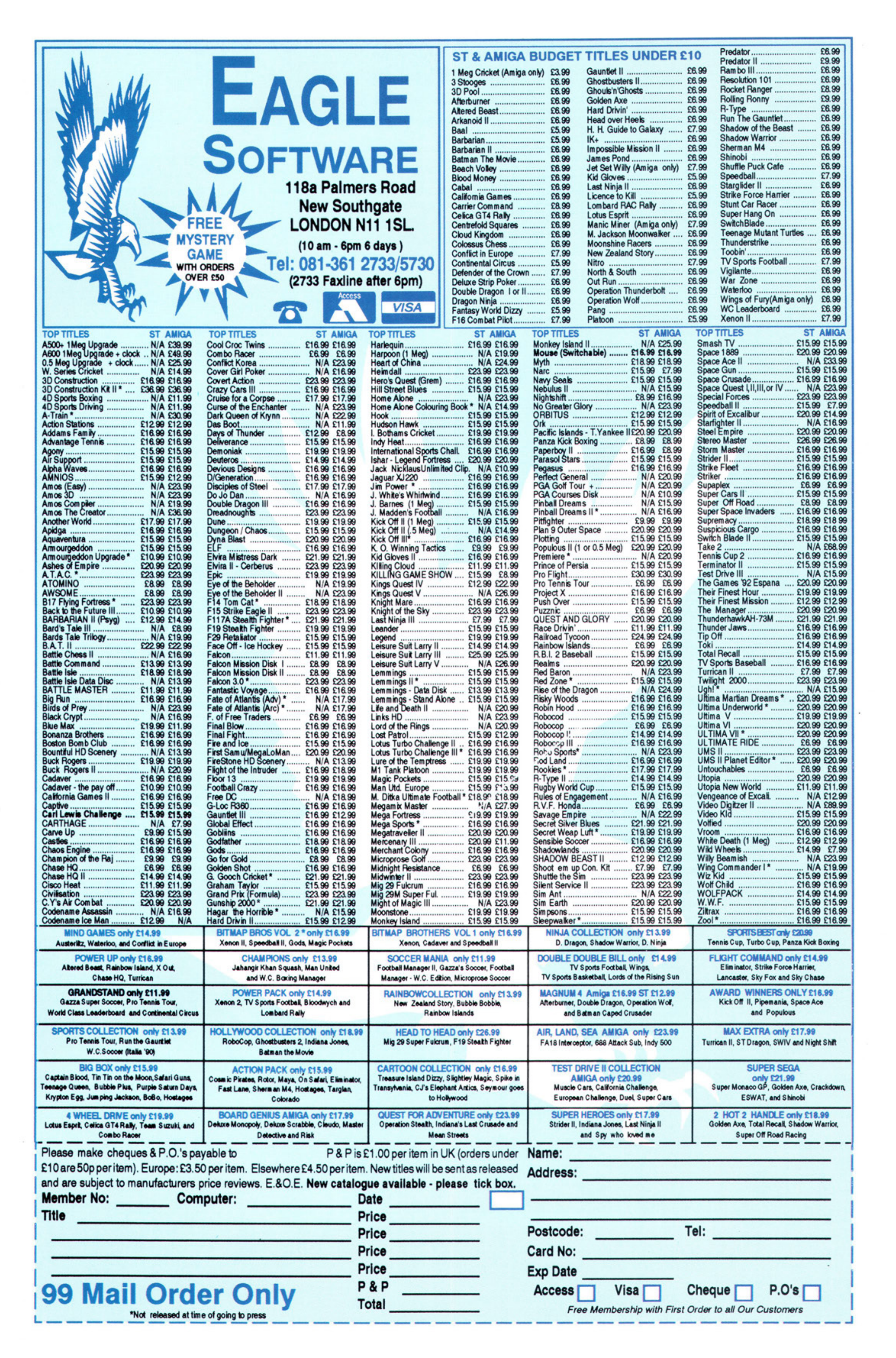
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• We can never give personal replies by mail, so don't send us a stamped-addressed envelope.

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• We are available for enquiries by telephone every Tuesday between 10am and 6pm, and we'll be happy to talk to you then.

• Our advertising department can help with problems concerning companies who advertise in the magazine if you phone during normal office hours.

• Our subscriptions service and the *Amiga Format* Mail Order department are not in the same building. They can be contacted on 0458 74011.

WORKBENCH

If you have any problems with the technical side of your Amiga, with hardware or with serious software, Pat McDonald will try to answer you in the mag. Or, if you have any advice for others or any handy tips to share, send it in and you could win a prize.
WORKBENCH, *AMIGA FORMAT*, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

GAMEBUSTERS

If you've just found the cheat mode, mapped out the levels or found all the passwords for the latest game, send the info to Maff and you could win a prize. Or, if you're stuck, ask Helping Hand for advice – or solve someone else's problem and win a prize!
ANDY NUTALL, GAMEBUSTERS*AMIGA FORMAT*, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

LETTERS

The letters pages are there for you to air your views and share your opinions: please remember not to ask questions that should be in Workbench! Damien is looking for thought-provoking or entertaining letters, the shorter the better. Prizes given for the best two.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, *AMIGA FORMAT*, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

COMPETITIONS

To enter a competition, write the answers and your name, address and phone number on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope and send it in. You can enter as many times as you wish, but all entries must be posted separately: don't put several entries in one envelope together, or include entries with letters to any other part of the mag.
COMPETITION, *AMIGA FORMAT*, 29 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2DL.

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AMIGA FORMAT MAIL ORDER, THE OLD BARN, SOMERTON, SOMERSET TA11 7PY.

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Hello and welcome once again to the bit of the magazine where you get to have a direct say. And, if we're going to be perfectly honest, I get a good chance to make my opinions known as well. Let's take a look and see what issues you lot have been taking an interest in. But just before we do, remember that if you've got any thoughts, ideas or opinions to offer, the address is Letters, **Amiga Format**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. And try to keep it short!

FIRST STEPS

Two weeks ago, I bought my first computer – a Commodore Amiga 500 Plus. I have enjoyed trying to get used to it, mainly thanks to a Special Edition of *Amiga Format* which came with my 'Cartoon Classics'. The breakdown on Workbench by Pat McDonald is so easy to follow, just right for me, a real beginner in computers.

The inch-thick manual that came with my Amiga seems to me very hard to understand, especially the terminology – it might as well be in Chinese! But Pat's Workbench advice really got me switched on.

So when I bought my first copy of *Amiga Format* I raced through the pages to Workbench, only to find questions and answers and nothing really to have a go on. There must be other Amiga users like me wanting to really explore the depths of Workbench, but in an easy-to-follow language.

I would like to use my Amiga to its full, powerful potential and not as a £400 games machine. I would like to see something like a monthly fact sheet, called say 'Workbench Workout', reviewing each window: Utilities, Prefs and so on. I am sure that Pat McDonald and team could put a very useful package together.

Harry Wragg, Glemsford

Previously, we've done articles on Workbench for beginners as a six-month series starting in January, mainly because most new owners tend to get their machines at Christmas. But I've been convinced now that there's a year round demand for something along the lines you have suggested, so we'll work on it for next month. How's about that, then?

DUFF DISKS?

I am writing to you for a bit of advice on a problem I have regarding the game *Flames of Freedom (Midwinter II)*, which I bought just less than a year ago. After a couple of months of use, whenever I tried to save a game the program crashed with the message 'Disk Error', losing the info I was trying to save.

I called the MicroProse helpline and they told me that I must have bought 'a bad version' and that if I returned the original disks they would replace them. This I did and my new disks arrived a week later.

After two or three months of on-and-off use, the exact same problem occurred. I was informed by MicroProse that the problem was caused by 'a bug in the program that caused eventual corruption of the save disk' and that there was nothing I could do about it.

I find this totally unacceptable. I can think of no other industry where this would be allowed.

Terry Roddy, Swindon

It's a good point, though MicroProse and many other large software houses have an exemplary record of providing after-sales service. The real problem is that disks are basically very fragile anyway, and the major problem is that too many games are set up to save on

Continued overleaf



Got a picture you're proud of? Send it in, see it in print and win an *Amiga Format* binder! Since Letters is where you get to contribute your words, we thought it would be the perfect place to see your pics on display too. However your image was created, whether you've sketched it in *DPaint* or generated it with a ray-tracing package, we'd like to see it. Only the best will make it into these hallowed pages. Send your entries on disk in IFF format to The Gallery, Letters, Amiga Format, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.



'Vendetta', by A Berwick of Hampshire.



to the actual game disk. Inevitably, a disk that gets a constant flow of writes is going to get corrupted sooner or later, and if it's the program disk, that means you can no longer play the game.

If a game-save option is offered by a game, it must be able to save to a separate disk. However, if you use the same save disk month in, month out with lots of different saves there is always a chance the disk will go dodgy. What you should do is get a fresh disk every few saves and save games to this.

One other point: it's good to hear that a game has enough staying-power to keep you interested for more than a year, but inevitably, disks are a fragile medium and are going to wear out after a couple of years.

TWO MUCH

Why do so many two-disk games refuse to use two drives? When I forked out £64.95 on an extra disk drive I expected to be able to use it. Yet on most games with more than one disk this doesn't seem possible.

Even one of my favourite games, *F-19 Stealth Fighter*, is guilty of this. It's just inconsiderate, as is the fact that most games are overpriced and not hard disk installable. Are you listening, programmers?

Matthew G, Didsbury

Quite right too. One amusing fact that MicroProse ex-PR chap Martin Moth told me was that a hacker sent them a version of F-19 *cracked and compacted so it fitted on one disk and still worked absolutely fine, so maybe some two-disk games are unnecessary anyway.*

That apart, you are right, It's just laziness that two-disk games don't use a second drive and should be ruthlessly purged from our glorious nation. All games should work on all Amigas, all processor types and even on the CDTV.

Hard drive installation is only not possible because software houses still feel they have to use disk protection as a weapon against casual piracy. You can see their point. I wonder if more games will be hard disk installable when they become available on CD.

WHAT PRIZES?

I noticed while flicking through the 'How to contact ***Amiga Format***' column you said about Letters 'Prizes for the best two'. Two? Is it me that can't count, or did you give four prizes away in July's issue?

Claire Martin, Edinburgh

Indeed. We're supposed to give two prizes a month, but I make up the rules as I go along. If there's a lot of letters I like, we'll have more: if there aren't any I like, we won't give any prizes at all. High-handed, eh?

RIP-OFF MERCHANTS

A friend of mine bought a game from a local computer shop and when he got it home it crashed. When he took it back, the owner was not very happy, but he exchanged it for another one. When my friend got it home, he discovered that that copy crashed too.

Back he went to the shop, but this time he asked for his money back, because the program did not work on his machine. He was told in no uncertain terms that under no circumstances would he get his money back, because his machine was at fault, not the game. By this time tempers were getting a bit frayed, so he left the shop. This is where I got involved.

I tested the program under Workbench 1.3 and 2 and found that it crashed on both systems. Time to contact the software house involved, So I went to another computer shop and asked them if they could help. They tested the game again, gave us the phone number and gave all the help I needed.

I phoned the software house and spoke to a very nice person who said yes, there was a problem with the program and a new version should be available in about three weeks. I then told him of the problem with the shop and he agreed that the money should have been refunded as the goods were faulty.

So I went back to the shop and he still would not refund the money. The main reason for this letter is to warn all customers who buy software from any shop that if they do not want to refund the money they will not. Simple as that.

JB Palmer, Havant

This is a common problem with all kinds of retail stores. I bought a record once from a shop, got it home and discovered it actually had a large chunk missing. I took it back and they refused a refund, even when I got to the point of shouting at them (probably not too helpful, I admit).

What you really should do, in a situation like this where the evidence is absolutely clear cut, is take the shop to the small claims court. This will not cost you anything and will get him lots of bad publicity in the local papers, if you handle it right. It's a matter of principle, so you should get your rights. Contact your local Citizen's Advice Bureau for help.

JUDGEMENT DAY?

In your article about the A600, you say "We will continue to support the A500 until we cease to exist in 2020." What happens in 2020?

Allan Donald, Stewarton

Err... sorry about that. It had actually never occurred to us. We'll have a think about bringing numbers back.

NOT A NUMBER

I have been a reader of your magazine since Issue 7 and on every Coverdisk up to number 32 there has been a corresponding number on the label. Then when you come to look at number 33 there is no number to be seen. Bring back the numbers, pleeeeease!

Michael Stansfield, Rochdale

Do you really want to know? The world is hit by a giant meteorite... no, but seriously, we were just trying to make the point that the A500 will be around for a very long time and we will continue to cover it as the most popular machine. By 2020 we'll probably have computers plugged direct into our brains.

RIVALS

You are right in reassuring readers that the ceased production of the A500 isn't the death of the poor creature. With over one million of them in this country alone, I'm sure that developers certainly won't be leaving us in the lurch.

But will Commodore be able to produce a computer that can really match up to the the PC in specification as well as price? Isn't 32 colours a little bit too weeny for today's market? Like we saw with *Monkey Island 2*, people were worried that it wouldn't be able to stand up to the VGA presentation of the VGA version.

Myles MacRae, Maidenhead

This would ring true, except for the fact that it just isn't. The PC can't scroll screens – it's a well-known fact. If you wanted a game like Monkey Island 2 *but minus the scrolling, you could do it in HAM quite happily and have 4,096 colours rather than 256.*

Point two is that the new A2000 replacement that is on the way will have not only a 266-colour VGA emulation mode (easy) but also a Super HAM mode with many, many more colours. We'll see who is competing in the CD title stakes in a couple of years...

KIWI QUERY

I own an Amiga 500 upgraded to 1Mb by an A501 upgrade and I was wondering, since half my Meg is fast RAM, will that affect the upcoming releases for the A5090 Plus? If so, how can I change my fast RAM to chip RAM?

I know you printed in ***Amiga Format*** Issue 32 how to do this but I find, and I'm sure many people agree with me (even if they are English), that it is horrendously scary fiddling with the inner workings of the Àmiga. Please find us an alternative to performing open heart surgery on our beloved Amigas!

Lindsay Smith, Papakura, New Zealand

There is one way – it's a piece of hardware manufactured in the States called Meg-a-Chip, which enables you to fit extra RAM and configures it as chip RAM for you. The trouble is, it involves unplugging this and refitting that, so it's nearly as complicated as doing the circuit board conversion.

Quite seriously, the best way is get the conversion

Continued overleaf



'Guardian of Isis', by Daniel McPharlin from Australia.



'Chamberlain', by J P Walsh of Huddersfield.



'Stoll', by Stephen Royle of Macclesfield.

PROFIT OF DOOM?

I work for a large computer company and have spent a few days on training as a sales assistant. I've had a few insights into their marketing strategies, and I thought you might like to know of a few things happening on the computer scene, according to people in the know (not that you're not, of course).

It would appear a major change is happening across the country. The south is full of 'power' PC users who are dominating the sales scene there. As you move further north, the Amiga gradually takes over. However this trend is swinging. PC owners are becoming more and more, and beginning to overtake the Amiga.

I work in Lincolnshire and we stock about twice as much Amiga software as PC. I would expect that to change gradually, and the PC to take over. As for the ST(E), there's no competition. We have five times more software for the Amiga than for the ST. Yet we'd better not write off Atari. There are rumours of a new super 32-bit Atari which, if they get it right, could kill off the Amiga.

On to Sega. The only thing to rival the Amiga is the Megadrive. Frankly, from the games I've seen the Amiga is sitting pretty. There's nothing to rival *Killing Game Show* for graphics or sound. But once it starts to realise its full capabilities it should wipe the floor with the Amiga. Then again, it is only a console, and the 'real' computer will always rule. You can't write a letter on a console.

The same applies to the Super Nintendo. With less than ten games for it, it's got nothing on the Amiga so far, despite having a better spec than the Megadrive. The old Nintendo, well it's a heap, basically.

So will the A600 be enough to save Commodore? Although the Amiga will be around for a while yet, it could be dead by 94 – easily. And I quote someone from our head office, so is he a total and utter prat, or does he know what he is on about?

Anon, Somewhere

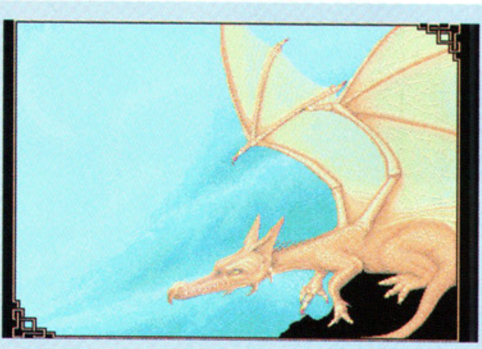
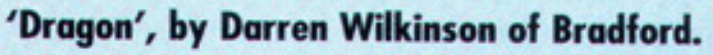
Well, actually, yes, he's a fool or he's misguided. The danger with the computer industry is always listening to the wrong people. There's always lots of people who are convinced they know what's going to happen. Part of the problem is that on occasion, if enough people start saying something that's completely wrong it can become true.

Technically, the Sega Megadrive is an inferior machine to the Amiga: the graphics are no better, the sound is absolutely comical, the games are generally of a lower standard and most of the best games are converted from the Amiga. The SNES is a very good machine, and very cheap, but games are a ludicrous price. Either way, the console market is actually a very separate entity from the home computer market and the consoles will not directly affect the A600's sales.

The misreading of the PC-Amiga sales balance here is almost completely silly. PCs are mostly bought by businesses, so they are commonplace everywhere, but the pick-up of games sales is slow. All cause for optimism about PC games sales is based on comparison with the US, where the situation is completely different. There is no evidence of a substantial alteration towards game-buying in the habits either of people who work on a PC, or of people who have a work PC in the home.

To consider that the new Atari (a very powerful machine indeed, and very cheap) might make any impact on the market shows a naive and limited understanding of the dynamics of the computer market. The Atari ST has killed off Atari's name in the home computer market and conceded that ground to the Amiga. To imagine that they can now re-enter the market place with a new machine that's not compatible with ST software and rebuild any level of sales inside, say, three years at least is totally misguided.

Add on the fact that the A600 has just seen the price-cut to £299 and the fact that Commodore are now rationalising the Amiga range with more powerful models, and case closed.



'Dragon', by Darren Wilkinson of Bradford.



Next month

AMIGA FORMAT 40, NOVEMBER 1992

DO NOT FORGET! Get down the shops for your copy on Thursday Octber 8th, or you could miss it!

HOW TO DO ART PROPER, LIKE WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS DO!



We ***know*** you've got a copy of *Deluxe Paint*. After all, everyone's got a copy of *Deluxe Paint!* But do you use it a lot? Did you give it a go a couple of times and then get discouraged because you couldn't seem to do anything decent?

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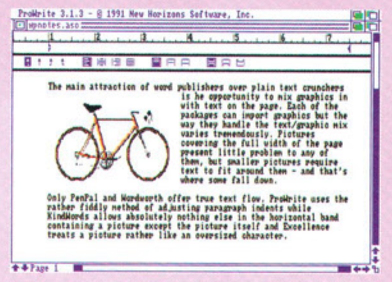
We're going to show you how. If you've ever wanted to get a real start in Amiga art, this is what you need. We'll show you tricks and techniques for using *Deluxe Paint* that will surprise you, because they make it easy to do amazing things.

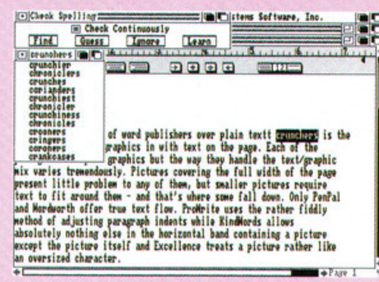
We'll give you lots of ideas of what to draw, and how to make interesting pictures even if you can't draw for toffee. And we'll show you how top graphic artists go about producing graphics for games. What more could you need?

WHICH DIGITISER?

Every video digitiser you could possibly even think about buying will be tested and rated, and we'll show you how these great gadgets can be used for creating marvellous graphics without really trying.

WHICH WORD PROCESSOR?





As promised last month: we're also going to be testing every word processor on sale, to tell you which is worth saving up for, which is a good option if you need something cheap straight away, and which to avoid.

ANOTHER COMPLETE COVERDISK PACKAGE

As ever, we don't yet have final confirmation of what it's going to be, but we're working away to get another useful and interesting program for you, and it could be worth anything between £30 and £150. What other magazine gives you more?

PLUS MUCH MORE...

Authentic, trustworthy reviews of all the latest games releases including, would you believe, Gremlin's *Lotus 3* – is it even better than its two predecessors? We've also got a heap of RAM expansions on the test bed, news of the new Amiga bundle, and the latest on the new Amigas. All this and much more in next month's unreasonably exciting issue of the world's bestselling Amiga mag.

Note: contents list is subject to change at last minute

done by a repair shop. It's not expensive.

You won't actually find software coming out for the Plus that you can't use on a normal Amiga, but some games will have extra features using the extra chip memory – slightly fancier graphics and sound – and animation and music programs all benefit from extra chip memory.

CHEAP IS BETTER

When is a software house going to have the guts to put out a game at £10-15? I can understand them being reluctant, but surely it would be worth the risk? Personally, I would be able to buy five, maybe even six games a month as opposed to the current two, and I'm sure that even the pirates would wonder if it's worth their while at that rate.

I can also see that it's not a simple equation – half the price, double the sales, double the revenue. It would be foolish to think this is the case, as there would be increased transportation and production costs. But surely software houses could then decrease the margins offered to high street retailers?

P Williamson, Hull

It's a very good point, but it's not as if it hasn't been tried. A couple of months ago, US Gold tried putting out what was due to be one of their top-price releases at a much lower price. The fact that I can't even remember what the name of the game was just shows how much of an impact that idea had.

As it is, there are now many games available at so-called 'budget' prices. Many of these are re-releases, but some of these older games are still excellent. And there is also a steady flow of brand-new budget software. Some if it's a but uninspired, but it can be fun.

In that context, another 'budget' release has no real impact. The only way to make people sit up and take notice would be to put out a top game, something like Vivid Image's forthcoming First Samurai *follow-up or* James Pond 3, *out at a lower price. And since these are guaranteed high sales anyway, why bother?*

PIRATE AHOY!

Where I live there is a race course and on Sundays there is a car boot sale. On one of the major stalls in the 'new goods only' section are some people selling brand-new, just-released, pirated games.

Sensible Soccer, *Epic*, *Sim Ant* and more are all there – even *Monkey Island 2* is there, and *Fire and Ice*. How do I go about stopping them? I've tried writing to Sensible and Ocean and heard nothing back.

Chris Hughes, Yorkshire

Telephone FAST, the Federation Against Software Theft. This is an organisation set up by ELSPA, the European Leisure Software Publishers Association, who represent all the software houses. They are always keen to hear about major, organised piracy like this. FAST are on 0628 660377.

WHICH AMIGA?

I have an old A500 (Kickstart 1.2) and I am planning to buy a new one. I would use it for programming, music and animations. Which, not too expensive, Amiga set-up would you recommend?

Geert Noel, Welle

Get an A600HD and a 1Mb RAM expansion to go in the trapdoor slot. The extra RAM will bring you up to 2Mb of chip RAM and you can later set it up with extra RAM in a card in the PCMCIA slot. UK readers – wait for news of A600 hard drives.

THE GREAT DEBATE PIRACY (YET AGAIN!)

Every month, we're going to pick out one topic which we've been receiving a lot of letters on and cover it in some detail.

This month, we seem to have kicked off the piracy debate once more after an article in which we pointed out that software houses are, quite definitely, fed up to the back teeth of the highly-exposed disk format. Here's some of your reactions…

I read last month's article 'Is this a bleak future for gameplayers?'. I suppose I could be called a pirate as I have a large collection of copied disks. Having said that, I hope you won't take the 'Oh, a naughty pirate, slap his wrists' attitude. Too many people do that already, and a long-term solution will never be found if nobody will listen to us.

My collection comprises some 175 disks, 89 of which are games, and if all those games had been bought legally they would be worth roughly £2,250. Since I got my Amiga at Christmas I have spent around £60 to amass this collection.

This is not, however, all the money I have spent on my computer since I have also purchased a second disk drive and sampler as well as a half-meg upgrade and the usual mouse mat, joysticks and disk boxes. Nearly all the money I save on games is spent in some other area of the Amiga market.

One pirated copy does not represent one lost sale of the original. If piracy was not available to me my £60 would probably have gone on a good flight sim and MicroProse *Grand Prix*, not on overhyped rehashes of *Defender* and abysmal *Mario* rip-offs. Generally I find that arcade games last me a month before I tire of them, and it takes that long to save up and buy them!

As things stand, just now I can get every new arcade game for a fraction of its full price, usually a few weeks before it appears in the shops. Plus, once I make my purchase I am free to make as many back-up copies as I wish, either for myself or for my friends. Which would you choose?

Hoggy, Glasgow

All I'm going to say is, what really is a reasonable price for a game? I've got a couple of pre-recorded videos I happily paid a tenner for, and I'll probably only watch them once or twice. I still don't regret it. When you consider that even big shops like Smiths and Boots sell games for about £22, if you've got six or seven hours' use out of a game, then it's about as good value as my videos. Am I right?

Being an avid musician, I would happily pay £60 or upwards for a MIDI program, even though I am unemployed at the moment, because I will use the thing frequently. All my games and other software are, however, pirated, both for my Amiga and PC.

Take *Epic*, for example. Judging by the reviews in the various magazines I would be extremely disappointed with the game had I purchased it and would have very little cash for the rest of the week. I am, however, prepared to pay £30 for *Populous II* as this is an excellent game.

What I am trying to say is that I believe the software houses ought to start lowering the prices of their games, or start bringing the quality up to standard as, let's face it, most of the games on the market are not worth the money being charged for them.

Anon, Somewhere

This is utter rubbish! You can't expect games to be yours by right: if you're short of cash, you can't expect to be able to get games all the same. It's exactly the same rationale as any other kind of theft. As for the 'poor quality' argument: well, you don't have to buy a game if it's bad, do you? When a bad film comes out, you won't go and see it: when a bad book comes out, you won't buy it. If people only buy good games, then publishers will be forced to get better. And mags like this help you choose the good stuff from the bad.

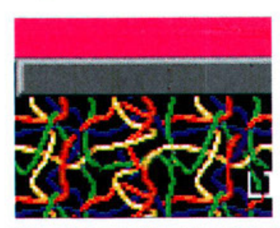
It is no secret that the price of games is extremely high in this country. The UK is nowhere near as successful for the console manufacturers as Japan and the USA have been and one obvious reason is the difference in price, especially in the Far East. There games are not beyond the pocket money of most children. here they are more like a birthday or Christmas present.

This in itself goes a long way to explaining the success of computers like the Amiga. While games are cheaper than on the consoles, they are still quite expensive. But they can be copied. And that alone is high on the list of reasons why people opt for a home computer instead of a console. I have often heard friends say, "Console games are better, aren't they, but you can't copy them."

James, World

A good point which many people in the computer industry have made, but they've kept it pretty quiet.

Spot the shot 39



Simply identify the game that this small portion of a screenshot is from, write the answer on a postcard with your name and address and send it in to us. The address is Spot the Shot 39, ***Amiga Format***, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. The first correct entry out of the hat every month will win a fabulous ***Amiga Format*** T-shirt!



The winner of Spot the Shot 37 is Michael Rushforth of Cullingworth in West Yorkshire, who correctly identified the game *John Barnes European Football*. An *Amiga Format* T-shirt is on the way to you, Michael!

ADVERTISERS INDEX

Who is Zool? Apparently, Zool is not only a Ninja from the Nth Dimension: Zool is also the name of the games editor on Japanese computer magazine Log-in, which is probably the biggest computer magazine in the world. He apparently has a tendency to wander around Texas in Sumo costume, and AF new boy Tim Smith tells us, *"He's a very nice chap. I like him."*

Vikings are alive and well and living in Britain. Researchers examining the genetic make-up of people in various parts of the country have discovered obvious signs of ancient populations, and those people living in the centre of the Lake District have clear Viking ancestry. The oldest race in Britain are the people living in Orkeny, whose ancestors predate the Celts and date back to a neolithic people of some 7,000 years ago. The people of South Wales are pre-Celtic Britons, while East Anglia is split into Angles in the north and Saxons in the south. It's worth rmemebering that racism can have no validity in a country that has been of *mixed racial identity for thousands of years...*

It may seem cool to bash dispensing machines around to get a can of Coke out of them, but did you realise it can be fatal? A US Army report issued a couple of months ago revealed that seven soldiers a year are killed when they hammer on a dispensing machine, usually when the machine falls on them. *Worse than friendly fire...*

Actual Reality

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If you're fascinated by anecdotes from the computer underworld, get a copy of Approaching Zero by Paul Mungo and Bryan Clough. Published in hardback by Faber & Faber for £14.99, this is an intriguing study of computer crime which explores the history of electronic extortion and robbery.

You'll learn about some of the greatest computer disasters and hacking triumphs, from the first major British hack – which, for a few hours, fooled many into believing that the exchange rate between Britain and the States was one pound sterling for every fifty dollars – to the infamous AT&T 'logic bomb' of 1990 which shut down the whole of North America's long-distance call network for nine hours, affecting some twenty million calls!

Speaking of hacking, here's some inside info for you. Damien was at Liverpool University with Andy Beveridge of the Assembly Line, programmer of Cybercon III (remember that?). Andy and his computer club cronies hacked into the University's computer, managing eventually to give themselves an acess priority greater than the system's manager.

They could have changed their exam results and gained access to the work of one of then-PM Margaret Thatcher's major economic advisors. But did they? I might be prepared to say... They were eventually caught and forced to sign an agreement *not to tell anyone about it...*

Waves in the North Atlantic are getting higher, and nobody seems to know quite why. Over the last 30 years, the average height of a wave in the ocean has increased by 30%. Scientists studying the problem have saiud that it may have something to do with increasing differences in pressure between the area around Iceland and the region of the Azores, but they admits that this is 'only a quarter of an answer'. So really, nobody knows why it's happening. If you live on the west coast, *you better get your wellies on.*

The inventor of the Gaia theory (the ecological concept of the earth being like a single living organism, which forms the basis for Sim Earth) was a chap called James Lovelock, an inventor who nearly became accredited as the originator of the microwave oven.

Not long after World War 2 he was working in biology on a project exploring the possibilities of cryogenics – freezing and later resuscitating living creatures. Practising on mice, they used to revive the poor wretches with heated spoons, warming the hearts first to ensure tht it would be beating when the animal came back to life. Unfortunately, the poor little things would suffer severe burns.

Thinking that short-wave radiation was a better way of warming them from the inside, Lovelock borrowed a top-secret microwave generator from the Navy. It worked fine on the mice, but he also discovered he could use it to warm his lunch and cook baked potatoes in a few minutes – *thereby inventing the microwave!*

The Great British Crumpet is on the up and up! We've just learnt from a fascinating little 'filler' in the Bristol *Evening Post* that the British consumed 860 million crumpets in the last year. Apparently, the amount of money we spend on crumpets is up by 130% on 1986 to £37 million. *Isn't that deeply interesting?*

The Guardian ran a headline the other day that read "Over 500 escape certain death as cruise ferry sinks in collision". If it was certain death, how could they have escaped?

Amiga Format Issue 39

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Jason Holborn
Scott Johnston
Ed Rickets
James Leach
Brian Larkman
Gary Whitely
David Coleman
Brian Moore

PROMOTIONS ASSISTANT Tamara Ward

PHOTOGRAPHY Ashton James, Bradford-on-Avon;

COLOUR ORIGINATORS Phoenix Repro
PRINTERS Chase Web, St Ives PLC, Plymouth

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CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Sue Hartley 0225 442244



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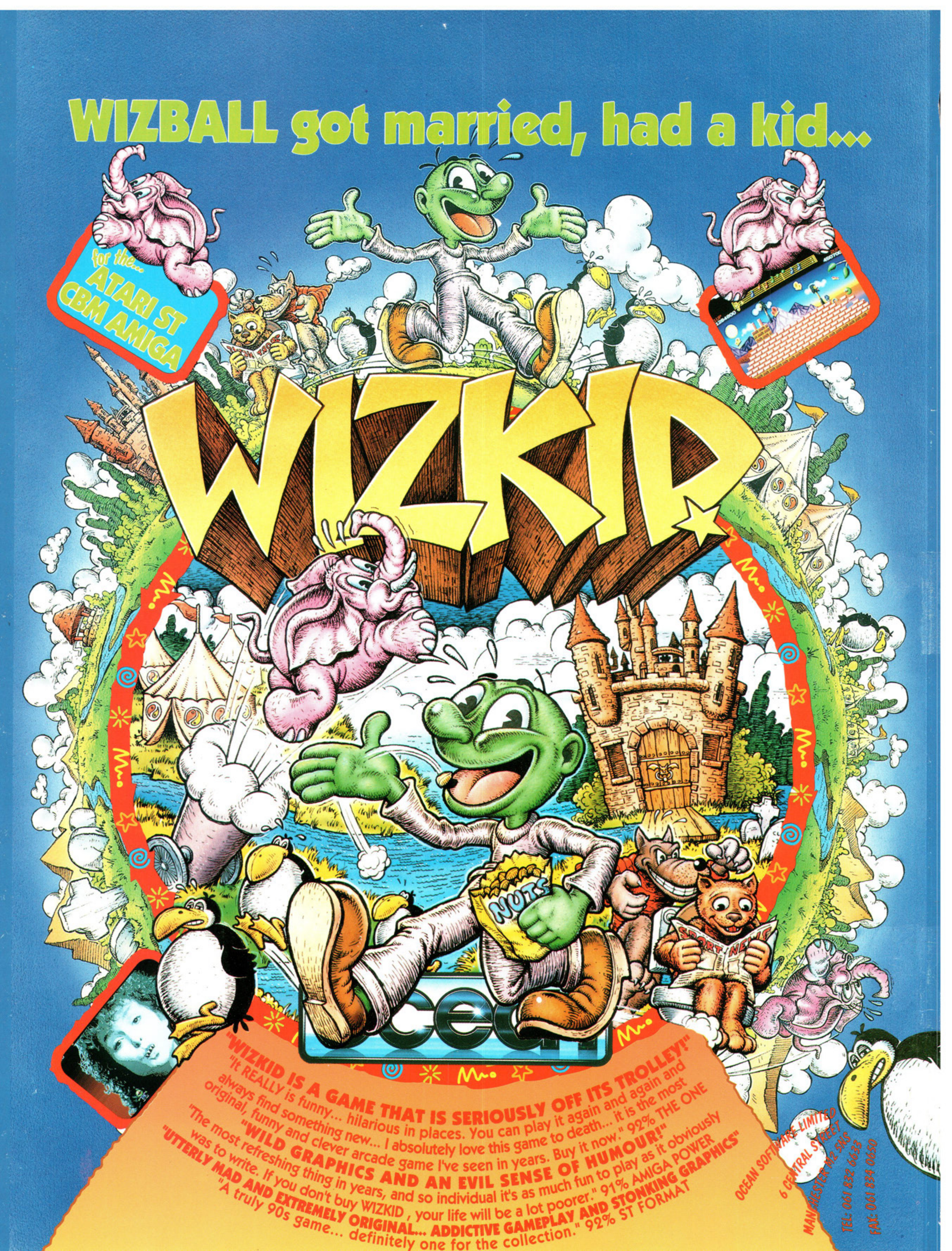
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